DUBAI TO DUHOK

A Travelogue

Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan

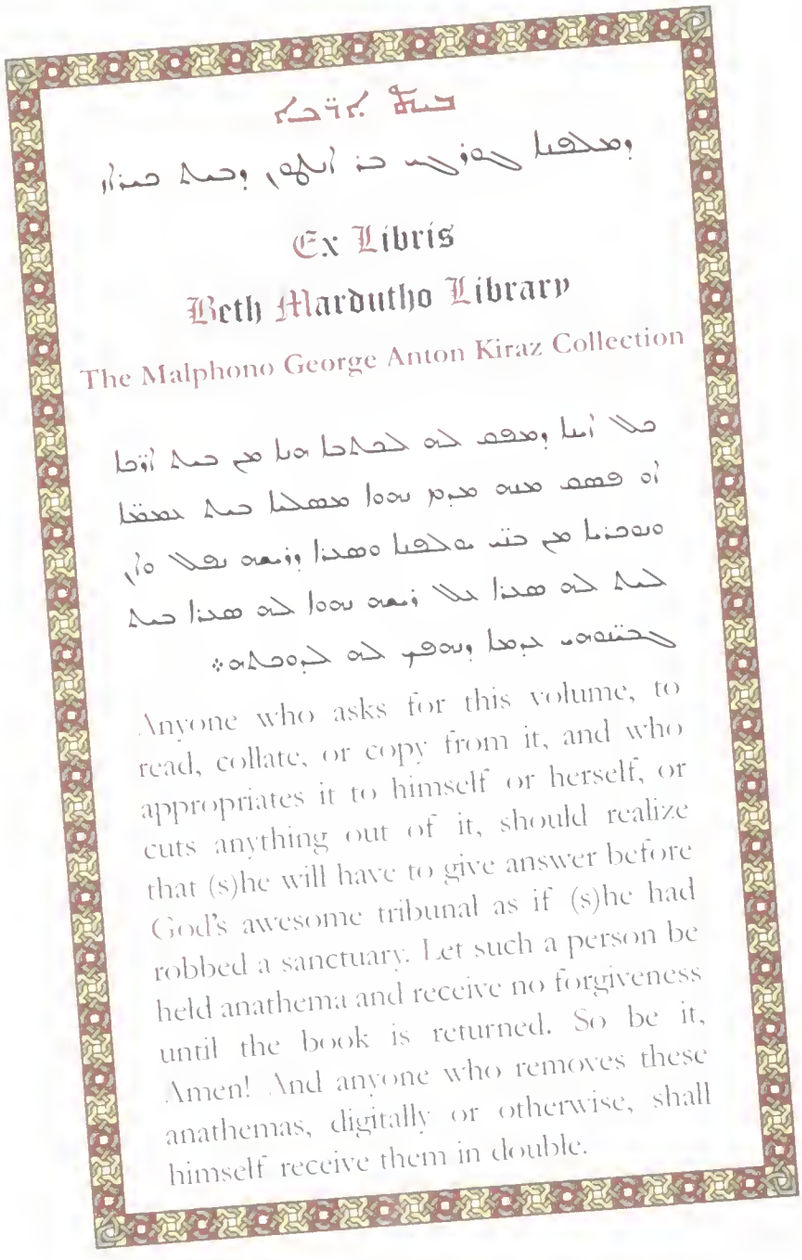


Thrissur, India
2009



At St.Mary Church, Tarzana, Los Angeles, California. Mar Aprem celebrated Holy Qurbana on 40th anniversary of his Episcopal consecration, 21 Sept 2008 along Fr.George Beth Rasho (Vicar) and assistant priest and seven deacons.

DUBAI TO DUHOK


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Anyone who asks for this volume, to read, collate, or copy from it, and who appropriates it to himself or herself, or cuts anything out of it, should realize that (s)he will have to give answer before God's awesome tribunal as if (s)he had robbed a sanctuary. Let such a person be held anathema and receive no forgiveness until the book is returned. So be it, Amen! And anyone who removes these anathemas, digitally or otherwise, shall himself receive them in double.

DUBAI TO DUHOK

A travelogue of an archbishop in Dubai, San Diego, Los Angeles, San Jose, San Francisco, Phoenix, Chicago, Dallas (Texas), New York, Dubai, Duhok, Erbil and Diana.

DR. MAR APREM METROPOLITAN

B.D, M.Th, S.T.M., D.Th., Ph.D.

Trichur, India

2009

Dubai to Duhok

A Travelogue
(English)

Author :
Most. Rev. Dr. Mar Aprem
Metropolitan Palace, Thrissur-680 001
Kerala, India
Phone 0091-487-2420978
E mail: aprem.mar@gmail.com.

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Detailed Outline

Chapter 1

Fifth Visit to Dubai.

Global Meltdown. Congregation around Sharjah. Fr. Victor Kollannur, Fr. Joju Anto, Paul Chackola. Holy Qurbana. Onam Festival. Timothy Mooken.

Chapter 2

San Diego to San Jose.

Addison Mooken, Jose Mooken. Holy Qurbana on Sunday. Fr. Khoshaba Sulaiman, Al Cajon, Dr. Miki. Many Indian guests at wedding. Miriam and Tony Katzdorn in Valley Centre. Orange County. Fr. Ashur D Khouri. Visit of Dr. Dorothy Chacko in 1958 in Beirut. My visit in 1962. Los Angeles on 17 Sept 2008. Fr. George Beth Rasho. Deacon Walter Rouvel and family. Weight from 78 Kg to 61 Kg. Deacon's wife Lydia and daughters. Eating Fruits. Franklyn and Anne. Verghese Antony. Holy Qurbana on 21 Sept 2008. Visit to San Jose. Cor-episcopa David Royal. Cousin's son Nitish and Harriet. Attorney Robert Awshalom. Fr. Oshana Kanon. Bishop Mar Joseph Sargis, Mr. Zia Marcus George of U.A.E. Pilathos. Biju Jose and Sumi in Cupertino. Dr. John Nadakavukaran and Priya. Joy Mulakken, Z. Kuruvila, Sara, Dr. Kiran, ACERO, Centrum. Passport sent to Washington DC. Erbil airport. net. David Royal. Details.

Chapter 3

Phoenix (Arizona)

Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis. Grand Canyon. Cor episcopa Frederick. Rabi Juliet Kasha. Dr. Sharlet, daughter Nohra, Dr. Francis Murad. Najiba. 5th October Holy Qurbana in the Assyrian Church in Glendale. Good choir. Malpan Kaku Lazar's daughter Alexandra. Mart Mariam Cathedral in Trichur. Sydney 58 houses.

Susan from the choir in Chandler parish. Indian Jacobite Church. Mar Yosip Khananeesho Church Website. Message from Fr. Kando Kando. Andrew Aziz.

Chapter 4

Chicago, Dallas and New York

6th October Phoenix to Chicago "Is traveling your Job?". 55 foreign trips. Dr. Asha Alex Furlow at O'Hare airport. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV. Many Assyrians to receive Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV. Stay with niece Asha and the nephew Sanil Mooken and his wife Maria. Fr. Klutz. Holy Qurbana on October 12 at St. John's Assyrian Church. Archdeacon Sadok de Mar Shimun. Fr. Antwan Latchin. Deacons responding in English, while priest was reciting prayer in Aramaic. Amen is common in Aramaic or English. Mr. Misha and his photos. CD of my 16 songs in Malayalam. Radio Station. Adnan David and his family.

19th October I assisted Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV while celebrating in Mar Gevargis (St. George) Cathedral. Fr. Dr. Patros Patros is new vicar in the Cathedral. Fr.Lawrence Namato of Detroit. Visiting bookstore. Evening Dinner reception. I gave the keynote address. Chorus *Gabbara d'umtem u Qaddisha d'etan*. My experience with English and Hindi Choirs in Jabalpur 1957-1961 and later in Bangalore during 1964-1966. Nomination of honorary Doctorate to H.H. Mar Dinkha IV by the Oriental Institute, Chicago University.

Seeds of faith magazine, a youth publication of St. Andrews Parish. Jewish Synagogue in Glenview. Bnai Jehoshcia Beth Elohim Jewish congregation sold their synagogue but share the space till the Jewish congregation completes their building in Deerfield. Interesting co-operation between Jews and the Assyrians. Dr. Dorothy Chacko's remarks in 1957 about the Assyrian Church in America.

Dallas, Texas

Niece Annie Jacob, House baptism in 1966 in England to Annie and twin sister Tresa (Maya) along with their elder brother Varkey

(Varghese). On 15th October flight from Chicago to Dallas, Texas. Second class ticket. What is a bishop? Tooth paste larger than the permitted size thrown to the garbage bag. Joe Joe Chackola. Concert in the school of Maya's daughter, Kristina. Visit of Dencil Johnson, tennis teacher. House of James and Sindhu Thottan. Orthodox Church of America (OCA). Fr. George Florovsky, my teacher in Princeton University in 1967. St. Vladimir Seminary in New York. Mathew Chackola, wife and two children. Maya's husband Jacob Chempitra and his parents Dr. C.V Jacob and wife Rajamma. Donald. Daniel Worry about Iraq visit. Bill Gates.

New York

October 21, 2008 from O'hare to JF Kennedy airport in New York. Simon Thermadom. Visit to the home of Surma Mooken. Visit to the Indian restaurant owned by Surma's husband John and Surma's cousin Samuel Pananchery. Telephone to Geevarghese Emmatty. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. John Thermadom. Departure from New York.

Chapter 5

Dubai again

Arrival in Dubai. New Terminal. Moffat, brother in law of Timothy Mooken. John Paul and others waiting for me at the old terminal. Shifted to the flat of Paul Chakola. Friday 24 October Holy Qurbana at St. Philip Chapel in St. Martin Anglican Church at Yarmook. My first Qurbana in this chapel rented by our congregation on an annual basis. Seby and Swetha. Elvis Chummar. Meeting with Assyrians. Advocate Carmen, Zia Marcus, Ward Zaia. Telephone talk with Mar Isaac and Mar Gewargis. Jack Mannukaden drove me to airport on Saturday 25th October. Assyrian member from Sydney going to Kurdistan with his mother for his engagement with an Assyrian Girl. Dubai rule to keep city clean.

Chapter 6

Duhok

6th trip to Iraq. Previous trip in 1962,1968,1977,1984,1990. Metropolitan Mar Gewargis and his priest receiving me at the airport

in Erbil. Drive to Ankawa, Suburb of Erbil. Lunch. Three hours drive to Duhok. Meeting Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and other prelates who had arrived at Duhok a few hours earlier.

First church in Duhok in 1953 by Mar Yosip Khnaneesho Metropolitan and Mar Sargis. The second was Kirkuk by the Metropolitan and Bishop Mar Yohannan Philipos.Visit to Babillo on 30 October. Visit Malik Paul Khoshaba, son of late Colonel Yosip Khoshaba. 15 Bishops in 1862 A.D. Received copies of journal called Diana and of Mawtwa journal or Mawtwa Ammaya. Summary of an M. A. thesis about lamentations.

Duhok Governorate. Duhok territory

1. Duhok Castel 2. Chewar Stoon Settelment 3. Mahathaya Hill (Malta Hill)

4. Halamata Cave

Duhok territory has two districts. 1. Zawite District. 2. Dosbi District.

Semeal territory has two districts.

1. Faidi District. 2. Selevani District.

Zakho territory. Important Archeological locations:

1.Dabal Bridge. 2. Zakho Castle. 3. Qubad Pasha Castle.

4. Kesta remains. Kesta is ancient city. Assyrian, Greek and Islamic coins and statues are found in this city. It has 3 districts.

1.Rezgari District. 2. Sendi District. 3. Goli District.

Amadeya Territory are:-

1. Easton Gate (Zeyvar gate).
2. Western Gate (Mozul gate)
3. Amedeye Mosque Minaret
4. Emirates (governing house)
5. Princes Cemetery
6. Qubad School

1. Sarasary District . 30 Km far from Duhok, Royal Palace. My visit to Qasha Odisho of Sarsank in 1962 at Mosul, when he was the manager of the Royal Palace at Sarsank. Deacon Basim Nona of Canada.

2. Berwari Bala District. Bishop Mar Yawalaha. Bishop Andreos Yawalaha died on 17 June 1973.

3. Nerwa Rekan District.-Sheikhan Territory. In 1970 part of this District is joined to Telkef territory. This territory has two Districts 1. Mizouri District. 2. Mereba District. Akri territory. It has 4 Districts 1. Seven tribe's District 2. Gerdaseen District. 3. Sourichee District. 4. Nahle District.

Chapter 7

Erbil, Diana.

Details of Erbil airport. Diana city was settled in 23rd century B.C. Population of Erbil 1.19 million. Median Empire. Sagarthiar tribes of Zagros. In 521 B.C Darius I of Persia defeated king Cyaxares of Media. In 331B.C Alexander the Great defeated Darius III of Persia at 60 miles west of Arbel. Early Christian Center in 100 A.D there was a bishop in Arbel. In 346 A.D almost 350 Christians became martyrs.

Adiabene. In 13th century Gewargis Warda is known as Arbillaya from Arbil. This poet wrote some prayers for Ba'utha, Rogation of the Ninevites. In 1970 under Mulla Mustafa Barzani parliament of the Kurdistan Autonomous region was established by Kurdistan Democratic Party K.D.B. The other faction is known as Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (P.U.K). In 1996 Arbel was captured by K.D.P. Then P.U.K established alternate government in Sulaimaniyah in 1997 two Kurdish Parties signed a peace agreement. On April 10, 2003 after the fall of Baghdad Arbil had rapturous celebration.

In May 2006 the unitary government of Kurdistan region was formally presented. The new Erbil international airport has Kurdish flag flying instead of Iraqi flag. This airport has portrait of the Kurdish leader

Jalal Talebani and Masoud Barzani. Royal Jordanian flies from Amman. Kurdistan Airlines flies from Dubai and other Middle East locations. Erbil is under Metropolitan Mar Gewargis. Fr. Dr. Saman to be new Bishop of Erbil.

Chapter 8

The 12th Holy Synod

H.H. Mar Dinkha IV. Nine out of eleven prelates present. It was held in the residence of Bishop Mar Isaac Joseph. Mar Narsai Metropolitan and Mar Joseph Sargis Episcopa were absent owing to illness. Decided to promote secretary of the Holy Synod Mar Meelis Zaia as Metropolitan of Australia and New Zealand. Decided to consecrate Cor Episcopa David Royal as Bishop of California. Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV to make an apostolic visit to India to consecrate Bishops for India to assist Mar Aprem. Excommunicates Bawai Soro, the former Bishop of California.

Foreword

By Rev. Dr. Devassy Panthallookaran M.A., PhD.
Principal, St. Thomas College,
Thrissur, Kerala

As a Church leader Mar Aprem needs no introduction. As a writer he is well-known among the Malayalees and is equally exposed to the English speaking world. As far as Thrissur, the academic and cultural capital of Kerala, is concerned, his presence is a 'must and should in all the inter-religious events and all functions of common interest. His range is much more than that of a pure and mere cultic pastor. His appeal and charism are not confined to the Church circles alone. Now that Mar Aprem has brought about another travelogue, I must, at the very outset itself, state that his legacy is very much in line with the scriptural traditions and in perfect continuation of his own literary history.

Ever since the dawn of humanity man has evinced his nomadic and itinerant nature either for pastoral or commercial purposes. Life is nothing but a journey and every person is a traveller. It was Francis Bacon, who wrote in his essay "Of Studies", "Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man". I really wonder why he ignored travelling. There are innumerable instances both in the Old Testament and the New Testament of the Holy Bible which prove that life and travelling are inseparably linked. Just to cite some examples: The brothers of Joseph, leaving the south, travelled to Sheckem and then to Dothan (Gen. 37:12-17). The Dan race migrated from their ancestral place to the Southern parts of Lebanon (Jud.18) David fled to various places in Palestine for fear of Saul. (Ism.21-30). In the New Testament Mary goes to visit Elizabeth (Lk.1:39). Joseph and Mary go to Bethlehem in order to register their names (Lk.2:1-7). The

parents bring Jesus to the temple (Lk.2:1-7). The voyages of St. Paul, the Apostle of the gentiles, constitute one of the major themes in the Acts of the Apostles.

In ancient days people used horses and donkeys and in no less measure bullock carts. Along with the rise of civilization, and as a result of navigation and industrial revolution, what we witness to is a hike – qualitative and quantitative – in the speed and variety of the modes and means of transportation and communication. Technological and scientific discoveries brought to light many machines and accelerated the greatest of all machines i.e. man himself. In the beginning monkeys jumped from one tree to another. Our forefathers shifted from one place to another. These are days when people think in terms of leaving this planet and settling in others. An immense increase in the frequency of travelling is evident unmistakably and unquestioningly at all levels and ways. Centuries ago Socrates, the first Greek Philosopher said, "See one promontory, one mountain, one sea, one river and see all" Mar Aprem has seen more promontories, more seas and more rivers more than Socrates demanded or did himself. If Vatican ever decides to canonize a living person, it will not be far off when Mar Aprem is declared a model and patron saint of all travellers.

Dubai to Duhok is the 25th travelogue written by Mar Aprem. This book, as the title suggests is an account of the author's experiences, encounters, personal contacts etc. with individuals, communities, institutions and places in Dubai and Duhok and many more places in between. This travelogue portrays the writer's official and personal visits in the Gulf countries like Dubai, Sharjah etc. and places like Los Angeles, Arizona, Chicago, San Diego, San Jose, Dallas and New York in the U.S., and finally Duhok, Erbil and Diana in North Iraq.

The book figures solemn and pontifical as Mar Aprem depicts the Synod Scenario. The author sounds simple and cordial beyond

comparison as he enjoys the company of his relatives, fellow priests and lay people who represent migrants from Kerala. The book is excellent for its geographical or territorial details which have cultural and environmental significance. Needless to say, it was in fact heroic on the part of the writer to visit Iraq amidst political unrest. This tells upon the character of the author who seems to boast with H.G Wells "I am seventy years young." This travelogue will enable the persons to shed their wrong notions about Iraq as a Muslim centre. One is wonder struck as Mar Aprem explicates how Iraq is actually the land of our forefathers in Christian faith. We must agree with Anatol France who writes, "What is travelling? Changing your place? By no means! Travelling is changing your opinions and your prejudices." What travelling effects in the mind of the traveller will necessarily have corresponding impact in the minds of the readers, as well.

It was Saadi who commented, "A traveller without observation is a bird without wings." If this is so, one has to admit that Mar Aprem is really a bird, a holy bird and with a subtle difference that he has many wings. Without keen and extensive observation no writer can ever give, as this author does, even minute details about the growth of local churches, changes in climatic conditions, the bitter consequences of Kuwait war, the whereabouts of kith and kin etc. There are occasions which abound in sense of humour and it is characteristic of this author who has already published seven books exclusively on humour.

The universe is still an unfinished house. It resembles a flower not yet fully blossomed. Many areas are still incomprehensible and remain mysterious, unexplored. That it why Lord Chesterfield wrote, "The world is a country which nobody ever yet knew by description; one must travel through it oneself to be acquainted with it." Mar Aprem has a unique place among those who have imbibed this spirit

and have done justice to it. Again, as Bacon observes, "Travel, in the younger sort, is a part of education; in the elder, a part of experience." Accordingly Dubai to Duhok imparts inestimable education and is at the same time an intense experience – sharing.

The words of Lin Yutang are almost embarrassing. To quote, "A good traveler is one who does not know where he is going and perfect traveler does not know where he came from." Can we say that Dubai to Duhok is a useful book written by a good writer? If we consider Yutang's words literally, one has to say that the author of this travelogue is a bad one, because, he knows very well about his target namely the Holy Synod, and that he is an imperfect traveler because he is always aware and proud of his Indian nativity and sensitivity. Of course Yutang imagines a writer who is devoid of prejudices and free of considerations of caste, colour and creed. In this respect, we have a genuine, successful and prolific writer in Mar Aprem and a useful and meritorious travelogue in Dubai to Duhok. I wholeheartedly admire and appreciate this author, also because he is a former student of St. Thomas' College, Thrissur, and specially recommend this book to all lovers of Literature and Church History.

St.Thomas College,

Fr. Dr. P. R. Devassy

Thrissur 680001

INTRODUCTION

Oscar award winner for sound recording & mixing of the Movie Slum Dog Millionaire, Mr Rasul Pookooty, went to USA to receive the coveted Oscar Award with great expectation and excitement. But he was selected for special security in the immigration in USA. Because he had a beard and colour of his skin was dark. The immigration Officer took him aside and began to interrogate him regarding the purpose of his visit. He told that he was coming to USA to receive Oscar award. Usually the immigration experts do not believe all what a passenger says or claims. He should prove his innocence. Fortunately he had his Oscar nomination paper handy. When he saw the papers he said okay and escorted him till he got out of the immigration hall. If he replied that he had packed it in his checked-in baggage and he would get it later, he would have been in trouble. I will ask my readers to carry all papers in hand when you get into immigration.

On 29 April 2009 British Airways Flight No. 113 arrived from Chennai at J F Kennedy Airport in New York. The name of the passenger is Mohammed Kutty Ismael in his passport. Because of that name he was kept in the airport for two hours. Finally Indian Consulate official from New York came to the airport to explain and released him. He said that he came to New York just to help his boyhood friend Mr. Stanly Kulathara to contest New York City council election.

Although the super star Mammooty had no beard like Osama bin Laden, the name Mohammed Kutty created phobia for the Americans. He asked his fans not to make a big issue out of this unfortunate situation. The officials at the airport were doing their duty to interrogate every one who looks suspicious.

In this trip to US in Sept Oct 2008 I had special security marked on my boarding pass. First time I thought it was a special consideration for my religious dress. Moreover my passport showed that I had visited USA dozens of times. I am on a 10 year visa. One officer once explained to me that my American visa stamped in my passport by the American Consulate in Madras, India was permission to reach up to the immigration hall in the airport. If I wanted to go out to visit USA I had to prove that I had a genuine cause for each visit. This time I had a wedding invitation but it did not have my name on it. If they asked me whether it was a stolen invitation from somebody's baggage I will be in trouble.

In this trip one officer told me that he wanted to do special security check. Then he said I have choice. They will put me in front of a huge X-ray machine and it makes a huge noise. Or he will touch all parts of my body and I have to tell him if there is any sensitive part on my body which they should know before they touch. I replied that either method was okay with me. I thought of saying that I wanted a lawyer. But I kept quiet. I stood in front of the big X-ray. I was hoping that they will give the X-ray report if they found any mistake in my body.

After X-ray he said "you can go". I do not blame the American Immigration authorities. Since my beard and headgear shows similarity to Osama bin Laden, I have to get through special security.

The biggest issue during my visit to USA in September - October 2008 was the American Presidential election that was about to take place in November,

Many Assyrians in America did not want Senator Obama to win in the Presidential election.

Their feelings expressed later on the inauguration day 20 January 2009 by an anonymous writer in the Forum of Bet Nahrain magazine as follows.

"I studied Abraham Lincoln, and Obama is NO, NO, NO Abraham Lincoln (at all). Abraham Lincoln was one of the Founders of the REPUBLICAN PARTY, and a great Republican President. The Republican Party was founded on anti-slavery reformers (The Ideology of Freedom). The Democrat Party turned to Nationalizing Resources and Companies which severely limits FREEDOM (via socialism).

I'm back for one more comment - Since we are in a very serious Recession, Retailers, Manufacturers, Restaurants as well as Charitable Organizations are in dire need of HELP. This Week our new Leader plans on spending $160 Million Dollars on Festivities celebrating his so-called greatness. That is four times the amount spent on the last inauguration that is simply OBSCENE.

The mainstream media would make you think that OBAMA is holier than thou. It is disgusting. The mainstream media has put OBAMA on a pedestal because he has no place to go but down. Set more realistic expectations for him. He has never been a leader, did nothing legislatively as a Senator and only got elected because young ignorant blacks and youth of America think he is COOL and voted for the first time in US elections. They didn't even know his positions on the issues. They just knew he was COOL like them. God Bless America and save us from socialism and ignorance.

Last but not least, If Obama is that great, then why are most of his selections for his cabinet in trouble for something or involved in scandals and what "Change" is he bringing (all Clinton people)? People can't blame BUSH for OBAMA'S current corrupt appointees for his new admistration.I have no confidence in OBAMA, but to get us in more messes with his high tax increases. I hope too, that he proves me WRONG! "

Many readers may think that this Assyrian girl is proved wrong.

Another Assyrian wrote responding to the above comment.

"I don't want a president who draws crowds. That means nothing, I want a president to have had integrity, who loves this country, and who respects our military and knows he needs to protect us. I want a president who can make decisions without focus groups and without worrying about poll numbers. I didn't elect that focus group and that they are not privy to all the information that is necessary to make intelligent decisions. Any old rock star can draw a crowd. I want a president of high integrity, not a weather van who turns with the wind"

The Indian community was divided. Still I felt that the majority of the people I talked to wished Obama to win.

The richest monarchs' list is published by Forbes magazine in August 2008.

The top Twelve:

1.	King of Thailand, Bhumibol Atulya Teg,	35 billion.
2.	Sultan of U.A.E, Sheik Khalif Bin Sayid Al Nahayan	23 billion.
3.	King of Saudi Arabia, Abdullah	21 billion.
4.	Sultan of Brunei	20 billion.
5.	Sheik Muhammad Bin Rashid, Dubai	18 billion.
6.	Prince Hans Adam II of Liechtenstein, Europe	5 billion.
7.	Sheik of Qatar, Hamad Bin Kalif Al Thani	2 billion.
8.	King Mohammed VI of Morocco	1.5 billion.
9.	Prince Albert II of Monaco, Europe	1.4 billion.
10.	Sultan Qaloos Bin Said of Oman	1.1 billion.
11.	Aga Khan Prince Karim	710 million.
12.	Queen Elizabeth of England	650 million

The above figures are in American Dollars. 650 million is 65 crore or 0.65 billion. Crore is an Indian word used in English, or some people call it *Indlish*, that is Indian English.

I could not complete the writing of this travelogue in 2008 as I wished. As soon as I reached India in November I had a lot of

things waiting my attention. But soon I got an invitation to go to Australia to assist the Patriarch at the consecration of Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia as Archbishop of Australia and New Zealand. Therefore I traveled in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth in Australia. That will be the next travelogue.

Before forgetting some details of these two trips I kept on writing this book and the next. I tried to make it happen by June 13th 2009 when I complete 69 years of age. I am grateful to God Almighty empowering me to accomplish what I have done for the benefit of the posterity to learn about the Assyrian Churches in the different parts of the world.

My gratitude goes to Fr.Devassy Panthallookaran, M.A.Ph.D., Principal of St.Thomas College, Trichur, where I was a student for Intermediate course more than half a century ago, to be exact, from June 1955 to April 1957.

Mar Narsai Press, Trichur, which has published my many books during the last 35 years, deserves a special mention. I am indebted also to Johnson John T. who designed the cover of my books in recent years.

Trichur 680001, Kerala. Mar Aprem
21 September, 2009

Chapter 1

Fifth Visit to Dubai

People in Kerala talk about Dubai as a land of lucrative jobs. The majority of the residents of Dubai are Indians. If they are given citizenship in UAE they will elect an Indian Sheik. There are churches for the major Christian denominations in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Qatar, Bahrain, Muscat etc,

I made two visits to UAE area in 2005 and another two visits in 2006. I could not travel in 2007 due to vertigo and diabetic problems. In 2008 I made two trips. The first was in September on my way to USA and the second was in October while returning from USA. I mention about the visit of September 2008 in this chapter.

Dubai is getting less attractive to Indians. Indians are not offered good salaries. Cheaper labour is available from others like the poor people in Philippines, Bangladesh, and Pakistan etc. Rent for houses are soaring high. Sharjah is cheaper than Dubai for living expenses.

The following news item about expatriates from UAE needs our prayerful consideration for our brethren working there.

GLOBAL MELTDOWN

UAE FIRMS CANCEL 2,000 VISAS DAILY

Pradeep Pillai I ENS
T'Puram, February 6

Uncertainty among Indian expats in the UAE is reaching maddening heights as jobs vanish by the day. An average of 1,500 to 2,000 visas are cancelled in the white-collar sector every day, according to an analyst with a leading Dubai firm.

Schools are flooded with applications for transfer certificate, as families get ready to return home. There would be an exodus to India by March.

Though there are only a total of 3,200 declared job losses by seven companies in Dubai, estimates from market sources put this at 20,000.

Unofficial figures hint at 30,000 white-collar jobs lost in the past three months. This is in addition to the tens of thousands of labourers rendered jobless every week.

Glad news from U.A.E. in the Malayala Manorama newspaper dated 24 April 2009 is in spite of global financial crises UAE issued more than half million job visas, 6 lakhs 62 thousand to be exact, during the past six months. The same news item states that the frightening news that 3000 workers in real estate business who lost their jobs left their credit cards in their cars and locked and deserted them in the airports. But the authorities may think only 11 people deserted their cars in the airports. Those people were not related to real estate sector.

Many projects were stopped in U.A.E. Bahrain and Qatar are also affected. At the same time Kuwait and Saudi Arabia job opportunities are not bad like U.A.E. etc. Some who lost the jobs are returning home without visa. Some are trying to find suitable jobs abroad rather than live at home with low income in Kerala, where unemployment is rampant.

The congregation of the Church of the East in UAE is very small compared to other Christian denominations. We have rented for 2 hours every Friday morning 7.30 to 9.30 St. Philip's Chapel in St. Martin Anglican Church in the Church Area in Yarmook, Sharjah. The majority of our people are closer to Sharjah area. There are different Christian denominations with their own buildings of worship in the same place. That makes it overcrowded on Friday mornings.

Our people living in Dubai, Alain, Abu Dhabi etc cannot reach our church in Sharjah by 7.30 a.m, Other Christian denominations have different churches with priests in Sharja, Dubai, Abu Dhabi etc. Since we do not have a large membership we have to keep our people in one parish called UAE Mart Mariam parish. The distance makes it difficult to people. We tried to get the time of our chapel to 9 or 10 a.m. But the chapel is fully booked by different Christian groups. Exactly at 9.30 a Christian group from Africa walks in to the chapel with musical instruments, therefore we have to vacate at least 2 minutes before 9.30. There are no other chapels available.

During my visit in September the congregation arranged Emirates National School as they have a larger hall. The time was conveniently fixed for 9 a.m. Therefore we could accommodate more people. It was nice to meet some people whose marriages I had conducted in Trichur. Now they came with their children to worship in UAE. At the time of writing these words I understand that some students will shift their education to Trichur. As the school fee has increased some of members cannot afford to educate their children in UAE. They have to go back to their grand parents or relatives or boarding schools.

Fr.Victor Kollannur is the Vicar. He is employed in a Jewellery shop of a successful businessman from Trichur Mr. Joy Alukkas. Fr.Victor serves our parish in an honorary capacity. We cannot afford to pay full time priest in small parishes. Deacon Sachin Thimothy after passing his MBA degree in Chennai came to work in Sharjah to help our UAE parish. One priest and a deacon are necessary to conduct a holy Qurbana in our Church. In other Christian denominations lay people can assist as altar boys or lay assistant in the place of a deacon. I have been requesting repeatedly our young people in UAE to become a part time deacon to assist our Holy Qurbana.

Fr.Joju Anto, our Vicar General, also came to assist at the Holy Qurbana. His idea was to go to celebrate a Holy Qurbana in the Assyrian Church in Moscow where his friend from Baghdad days Fr. Odisho Samano is the parish priest. But visa did not arrive in time. So he came to Dubai with me and retuned after celebrating the Holy Qurbana in Sharjah on the following week. Then he made another trip via Dubai to Moscow a few days later. Thus the people in Sharjah could attend a Holy Qurbana celebrated by the Metropolitan assisted by two priests and one deacon.

Actually Fr.Joju Anto was in another flight from Cochin to Dubai. I think he had left 2 hours before my flight. When we reached the immigration in the airport we both reached at the same time. As a matter of fact I took advantage of old people to use the small three

wheeler cars for the sick and the old passengers above 60 years of age. If I chose to walk I would have been 10 minutes behind Fr Joju Anto in arriving the immigration counter. Recalling the ordeal I had at that place during my previous visit in October 2006 I was praying for easy exit at that immigration. Within few minutes Fr. Joju Anto and I reached near the members of our Church who were waiting just outside the exit. Fr.Joju Anto went to stay with Biju, husband of Anu, daughter of Fr. Simon Emmatty staying in Sharjah. Fr.Simon Emmatty and his wife Shelvi were staying there for three months taking care of their grandson.

The next day his sister Mrs. Bindu Moffat came with lunch for me. But Paul Chackola insisted that I should stay with his family. So I shifted there. Paul Chackola had obtained a Master degree in Business Administration with first class and had started business in Kerala in a large scale. His advertisements Chackola's Fairness oil was heard not only in railway stations, but also in airports. He got an award as a young Entrepreneur in business. It became a threat to his competitors in the market.Thus he could not succeed in the market in Kerala.

Therefore he is in Dubai and attempting to do business. He started with television sets made in Honkong. That too did not succeed. He had made good contacts in Dubai and started selling his Chakolas soap and tooth brush and tooth paste and chappels. His soap is of the colour of ash. He advertised on the Dubai radio in Malayalam as the only soap in the world which has the colour of *Kashayam*, that is tincture of bitter taste. The soap looks like the Pears soap which is to be considered number one in Indian market since my childhood. He promised to assist our small congregation in arranging a meeting with the Rulers of Sharjah and Dubai. Paul and his wife Jiji and daughter Diya did their best to make my stay with them as comfortable as possible.

Paul Chakola suggested that he should take me to show some sights in Dubai and Sharja. At the same time I told him since I had seen Dubai, Abudhabi, Sharjah etc in my four previous visits I was

not keen on going out. Still he insisted that I should see the tallest building the Burg Dubai. He took me there. I could not see the top of the building. As I had suffered from vertigo it was not advisable for me to look up. It was more than 160 storeys. Many people have the craze to be the greatest or the tallest building in the world. After Tsunami in 2002 December and after September 11 terrorist attack in New York in 2002 I thought that the craze for the tallest building will decrease. No, some are planning even taller buildings without disclosing the size early. They want to surprise the world with their claim of the tallest building after it is accomplished. Still people smell it.

In September was Onam festival famous for Kerala people. Especially in foreign countries most of the Kerala people look forward to this festival to eat a sumptuous vegetarian Onam feast with *payasam* (pudding with rice, sugar etc). When we reached Dubai our people told that Friday was planned for Onam festival. Therefore our people suspected that some of our members may be in a mood of Onam and may absent from the Friday Qurbana. Fortunately most people came to attend the Holy Qurbana. Some women were wearing their Onam sarees.

After Holy Qurbana members were in a hurry to go to different places to eat Onam feast. Some of us went to one of our member's family and had a good Onam feast. In the evening I was in the home of Timothy Mooken. He had invited some of his friends for dinner. Dr.George Johny Emmatty, a surgeon, of our Church working in Dubai was there. Dr.George Johny's father's mother is the sister of Timothy's father's father. I had met all of those mentioned above, at different times, and in different places.

We decided to cut conversation in order to give me half an hour sleep before going to the airport to catch the midnight flight of 14 hours non-stop to New York.

Chapter 2

San Diego to San Jose

On September 13 after celebrating Holy Qurbana in Sharjah and meeting people in Dubai I flew from Dubai international airport to JF Kennedy international in New York by a non-stop flight of Emirates Airlines. Upon my arrival on Saturday morning in New York Simon Thermadom met me and helped me to get into the flight to Washington DC. From there I took a flight to San Diego. Thus in the afternoon of Saturday I was in San Diego. My brother Addison Mooken was waiting for me there.

At Addison's apartment I saw my old musical instrument called sitar. Although I was tired owing to the long journey from Dubai to San Diego I tried to play sitar for some time. My eldest brother Joe Mooken came and took me to the Indian Hotel where the wedding party of Nadakavukaren family gathered for dinner. I am not at all interested in dinner. In order to meet our members who came from Toronto and other places I had to go to that dinner.

As I had to celebrate Holy Qurbana the next morning in the Assyrian Church at Al Cajon I decided to go and rest in the home of my niece Mia and Tony Katzdorn. Their only son Dane was happy to see his grand uncle who had baptized him some years ago. After Holy Qurbana Qasha Khoshaba Sulaiman known as Fr. Shaba entertained me for the breakfast with the parish members who had attended my holy Qurbana two years ago.

After breakfast which was over around 1.30 p. m. we rushed to the place where the Indian wedding was to take place. My Brother Joe Mooken's second daughter Dr. Miki drove us to the hotel where the wedding ceremony was taking place. Fr. Khoshaba, the vicar of the San Diego parish, assisted me. He is not fluent in English. I told him in Assyrian or in English, Amen is the same word.

At San Diego we do not have a church of our own. We have rented a church from the Protestants for our use. But we have a good choir and hardworking Assyrians. Fr. Shaba started staying in

San Diego instead of driving from Phoenix weekly. I was sorry to celebrate Holy Qurbana there because I missed Fr. Gabri Brakia who had suddenly died one month after my previous Qurbana on that altar.

Fr.Shaba showed me another church which we had planned to rent for the Holy Qurbana. These are smaller Assyrian congregations, unlike rich congregations in Los Angeles, Modesto, San Jose, Chicago etc where we had good Assyrian churches. I hope that the San Diego parish also will grow to have a church of their own.

After the Holy Qurbana and breakfast the time was about 1.30 p. m, I told Qasha Shaba that we have to rush to the hotel for the wedding. So we went. The members of the Nadakavukaren family of Toronto were waiting for me. There were some relatives and friends from Kerala who are living in New York, San Francisco, Toronto, London etc to attend the Indian wedding..

Actually the Catholic Chaldeans are more in number in Al Cajone area than the Assyrians. But in Los Angeles and Chicago areas Assyrians are more in number than the Catholic Chaldeans. Actually as I was standing near the hotel after the wedding some Chaldeans from Iraq saw me and stood in front of me with curiosity. My dress looks like an Assyrian, but I look like an Indian. I told them that I am an Indian, also a Metropolitan of the Assyrian Church of the East. I told them I knew personally many of their prelates and Patriarchs. They were surprised to hear that I had met their Patriarch Mar Poulose Sheikhu in Baghdad way back in 1962 and later in 1968. I told them that I had met their present Patriarch Mar Emmanuel Delli of Baghdad before he became a Patriarch and Cardinal. I used some words in Assyrians to impress them, but told them that I learned this language in order to perform liturgical services rather than to use it as a spoken language.

After the wedding and dinner reception in the hotel I decided to leave before it is all over, I had to get back to Miriam & Tony's home to sleep. Before we reached there they had already slept. Even telephone calls did not wake them up; Miki knew a trap door

for the dog to enter the basement of the house. Since she is small she could sneak in through that door and open the house for us to enter.

Next day Addison Mooken drove us to some places of attraction near San Diego with a good seaside view. There was a centre for meditation founded by some Hindu Sansyasi . The chapel was a quiet place. We could pray in that chapel without making noise. Some people pray with noise and others prefer to pray in silence.

ORANGE COUNTY

On Tuesday, 16 September Joe Mooken drove me from San Diego to Orange County. As he had completed 74 years of age I was hesitant in my mind whether his driving is safe. My father J. D. Mooken died when he was 68 years and 2 months old. Now his first four children Dr. Joe Mooken, Mrs. Leela Alex, Prof, Andrews Mooken and myself formerly George Mooken have crossed that age. By the grace of God, our parents' all ten children and all 20 grandchildren and 16, this number will increase, great grandchildren are living in good health.

When we reached the house of Fr. Ashur al Khouri he was waiting with some Assyrians as well as the priest of the old calendar. I am told that he is the retired priest of the new calendar, but serving the old calendar parish, as they have no priest in Southern California. Strange but true. I believe one day the old calendar and new calendar will unite as one Church, as before September 1968.

Fr. Ashur Al Khouri was a deacon when I met him two years ago. Bishop Aprim Khamis ordained him priest after the sad and sudden death of their Vicar Fr. Brakia. Ashur Khouri's father David was known to me when I stayed with him and his brother Shamasha Khouri, later cor-episcopa, in Beirut, Lebanon in 1962. Fr. Ashur Khouri was not there, as he was born only in 1964. Fr.Ashur's grandfather Fr.Pathrose Khouri was a well known priest among Assyrians.

I recall what Dr.Dorothy, wife of Deacon Dr. C.J. Chacko wrote about her visit to the house of Fr.Pathrose Khoury in 1958, four

years before I did. Dr. Dorothy writes about her visit to Fr. Pathrose Khoury in Beirut in 1958.

> "I washed and dressed, and then prayed earnestly that God would guide me alright. Directing the taxi to the big hospital near which I recalled the priest lived; I went on, past machine guns, soldiers in Sandbag doubts, and city police, till I found the area I recognized. Unfortunately the house where Rev. Pathrose Khoury had lived was torn down, and nobody seemed to recognize his name. No one knew English or French, and I knew no Arabic or Syriac. I went down to the next and larger street where there was a small bakery and tried again, meanwhile praying hard that God Who had brought me that far would enable me to join the morning service before it was over. Again no one seemed to understand. Finally I repeated, "Mar Shimun, Mar Shimun". Then a man broke into smiles and ran off, returning shortly with the priest's son David." (Voice of the East, Trichur, India)

LOS ANGELES

On 17 September 2008 Fr. Ashur El Khouri, Vicar of our parish in Orange County at Anaheim, drove me to Tarzana near Los Angeles. Fr. George Bet Rasho is the priest of St. Mary's parish in Tarzana. The priest met me at the church and showed me around the classrooms in the Assyrian School. It is a nice school, but a small one.

Some Assyrians scattered around Los Angeles find it convenient to send their children to the schools in the neighbourhood. But our Church is running our own Assyrian School at great expense in order to see that our Assyrian children will grow in a Church atmosphere learning the language of our forefathers, so that we will see the Assyrians in the next generation also. Otherwise the unity of the ethnic Assyrian community will be broken. So we make a loss today financially but tomorrow we will find our next generation loving our Church.

The Assyrian School is an expensive programme. Hence the Vicar Fr.George Bet Rasho sent an appeal in February 2009 to obtain 1000 sponsors. It is given below.

SOS

To our Assyrian brothers and sisters

Tonight we are hosting a telethon in support of

The Assyrian American Christian School of Los Angeles

We seek 1,000 sponsors that will help us support the school

for the next 2 years

Each sponsor will be asked to donate $25 a month

Will you help us Save Our School?

Tonight from 9:30 to 11:00pm

Pars TV (Satellite)

Parstv.tv (Internet)

Pars TV (818) 881-3030

Assyrianschool.org (Pay Pal)

Assyrian American Christian School (818) 996-5173

His servant,

Fr. George

After visiting school around 2 noon we went to a restaurant for lunch. It is owned by an Assyrian named George. As I do not eat meet we all, 3 clergy and 2 laity had a fish lunch. Fr. George Bet Rasho being aware of my health situation arranged fish to be grilled rather than fried. My Indian friends should learn that fried fish, though tasty is bad for cholesterol etc. But grilled food will not have the oil and fat that adds to our Cholesterol. If we cook grilled fish instead of fried fish our health will be better.

After lunch Qasha Ashur Al Khouri told good-bye to me to return to his parish in Anaheim. He would take more time to return than the time he took to come. Of course, the distance is the same for coming and going but due to the rush hour he required more than 2 hours.

Qasha George Bet Rasho took me to the home of Shamasha Walter Ruwel and Lydia where I stayed in August 2006. I had stayed there in 2004 also. They are nice people who took good care of me whenever I went there. Since Qasha Bet Rasho had arranged for me to visit Deacon Vologeses for supper, Shamasha Walter took me there. It was Deacon Vologeses who assisted me in 2006 for Qurbana and had come to meet me in Greyhound Bus station in Los Angeles in California when I came in 2004.

My stay at the home of Deacon Walter Ruwel was pleasant. Both Shamasha as well as his wife Lydia took care of me. On Friday 19th September Lydia discussed with me the menu for my lunch etc. As a bishop I said, "no meat", as a diabetic I said "no sugar, no fruits". I said that I was afraid about coming to U.S.A. Some 5 days ago I began to doubt my sugar level was shooting up. I decided to be strict with food. I had to watch my cholesterol level and weight. My Cholesterol was 160 and weight was 75 Kg. I want to reduce weight into 65 if possible. Ideal weight for my age 68 and height 5 ft 5 and a half inch is between 57 and 61 Kg for males according to the chart in Christian Medical College, Vellore, South India..

The Bible says I cannot increase or decrease my height. But my weight I can increase or decrease. To bring it down from 78 kg to 61 Kg is not easy. So without being too much selfish, I ask God to bring my weight down to 65 if possible. Cholesterol level at 160 is not bad. Some years ago the doctors advised us to bring it below 300, then they said 250 and in recent years 200. But last year doctors began to say 200 is high. Keep it below 150. I have a sneaking suspicion that cholesterol of many of my doctor friends is above 250. Their weight is also over normal. But they say that they do not get time to exercise or to walk to reduce their weight and cholesterol level. Hence they are helpless to help themselves. Yet they continue to advise us about these things. Anyhow they do it for the good of their patients.

On Friday morning I jumped on to the tread mill machine. I walked on the machine for 30 minutes and walked only one mile or, is it Km? at the speed of 2.5, sometimes reducing it to 2 or 1.8. Actually I could walk at 4 speed so that in 30 minutes I could cover 2 kms. I was

happy to notice that I had burned 170 calories in half an hour. Next time I will increase the speed a little higher so that I could burn 200 calories. I can control my diabetes by burning 200 calories every day. By sitting in front of my computer I cannot burn calories or reduce my weight. One method is to buy a treadmill machine spending 500 dollars (22 thousand rupees). But I always look for cheaper method. That is just to walk with one's own two legs for a minimum of 45 minutes every morning. In that case I cannot measure the calories I burn. I can only guess by gradually seeing the weight decrease and the lowering of blood sugar level or just a good feeling or hunch that I am better.

Even people who are physically fit after proper exercise, drop dead suddenly. We may call it massive cardiac arrest. So let us avoid cardiac arrests. We cannot get advance bail. We should take necessary precaution by eating the right food and taking physical exercise. Never can we keep doctors out. In diabetes and heart disease, I feel, exercise and diet take priority over insulin injections and pills of many varieties. I feel that in my speeches and books I should give more advice from this non-medical doctor. The cost of medication and surgery is exorbitant and impossible for ordinary people.

Lydia, wife of Deacon Walter Rouel, daughters Sonyia and Nahrain were very considerate about the food, as I told her I am a diabetic for more than 3 decades. My concern is about my health. I should serve my people at least up to 75 years of age that means that I have to be strict with diet and exercises. I know that if people invite me often to eat in their homes, it will reduce my active life. I usually plead with my hosts, "don't over feed me". I write about these non-spiritual things, because I believe that one needs a healthy body in order to preserve a healthy soul.

Deacon Walter runs restoration business. Assyrians as well as other Americans use his services. His daughters Sonyia and Nahrain were no strangers to me as I had stayed in their home in 2004 and on 16th August 2006.

On Friday Deacon Walter took me to an Indian restaurant named

Taste of India for supper. Being Indian he thought that he would order rice for me. I said as diabetic it is not advisable to touch rice. Then I found mushroom and mutter masala. Food is tasty. But I could not eat all. What is tasty and good is not good for diabetic patients. My cholesterol is 160, which is good. But diabetes troubles me if I am invited out.

On Saturday 20th September I had a quiet day at home. I was able to make some phone calls like a good shepherd who cares for his sheep. I had invited two families and three young people from our Church in India who live somewhere in the neighborhood of Los Angeles. One girl named Hydie, daughter of Mini and Anto working in Abu Dhabi promised to come but could not make it as she found out the route to the church was a busy one. She did not have enough driving experience to drive in the busy Highway. As I was looking for her I was wondering what happened to her. Later I realized that she had left a message in the phone stating her inability to make it to the church.

The St. Mary's Assyrian Church is in Tarzana, the suburb of Los Angeles. The address is 5955 Lindley Ave., Tarzana, between Oxnard and Hatteras, California, U.S.A. The computers will provide the route map if the correct address with Zip Code is entered in the Google Search in Internet. It is a useful service. Formerly in America people had to call friends to ask for directions.

Now you can get it from the Internet. Life is becoming easier. But if we make a mistake in the spelling of the street or in Zip Code we cannot trace it. Three days earlier my eldest brother Dr. Joe Mooken was looking at the route up to the residence of Fr. Ashur D.El Khouri in Orange County, but he could not find North Torrents Road. So he called and asked the priest again. He said we have to click at Torrents first then later North Torrents will appear in the screen. But if you look for North Torrents you may not be successful. Sonya, daughter of Deacon Walter, told me that Diabetics is reversible by eating the right food. She was reading a book captioned **12 steps to Raw Foods**. written by Victoria Boutenko.

The sub title is attractive. **"How to End Your Dependency on Cooked Food"?** The people who get tired of cooking food will be happy to read such a book.

Ralph Anderson, a quantum nutritional biochemist comments on this book. "This book is a bible for the raw vegan". Some of my readers in India may not know the word 'vegan'. It means a strict vegetarian. Not only Brahmins in India are vegans, some Americans too are vegans.

As it is not easy for all to read 266 pages of this book, I am noting down below the main parts of this book.

1. Why raw Food
2. Human Dependency on Cooked Food
3. How to End Your Dependency on Cooked Food
4. Recipes.

Eating Fruit - Crucial Information

We all think eating fruits means just buying fruits, cutting it and just popping it into our mouths. It's not so easy as you think. It's important to know how and when to eat. What is the correct way of eating fruits? IT MEANS NOT EATING FRUITS AFTER YOUR MEALS! FRUITS SHOULD BE EATEN ON AN EMPTY STOMACH. If you eat fruit like that, it will play a major role to detoxify your system, supplying you with a great deal of energy for weight loss and other life activities. FRUIT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT FOOD. Let's say you eat two slices of bread and then a slice of fruit. The slice of fruit is ready to go straight through the stomach into the intestines, but it is prevented from doing so.In the meantime the whole meal rots, ferments and turns to acid. The minute the fruit comes into contact with the food in the stomach and digestive juices, the entire mass of food begins to spoil. So please eat your fruits on an empty stomach or before your meals.

You have heard people complaining - every time I eat watermelon I burp, when I eat durian my stomach bloats up, when I eat banana I feel like running to the toilet etc - actually all this will not arise if you eat the fruit on an empty stomach. The fruit mixes with the other food and produces gas and hence you will bloat! Graying hair, balding, nervous outburst, and dark circles under the eyes will not happen if you take fruits on an empty stomach.There is no such thing as

some fruits like orange and lemon are acidic because all fruits become alkaline in our body, according to Dr. Herbert Shelton who did a research on this matter. If you have mastered the correct way of eating fruits, you have the secret of beauty, longevity, health, energy, happiness and normal weight.When you need to drink fruit juice - drink only fresh fruit juice, NOT from the cans. Don't even drink juice that has been heated up. Don't eat cooked fruits because you don't get the nutrients at all. You only get to taste it. Cooking destroys all the vitamins. But eating a whole fruit is better than drinking the juice. If you should drink the juice, drink it mouthful by mouthful slowly, because you must let it mix with your saliva before swallowing it.You can go on a three - day fruit fast to cleanse your body. Just eat fruits and drink fruit juice throughout the three days and you will be surprised when your friends tell you how radiant you look!

KIWI: Tiny but mighty. This is a good source of potassium, magnesium, Vitamin E & fiber. Its Vitamin C content is twice more than that of an orange.

APPLE: An apple a day keeps the doctor away? Although an apple has a low Vitamin C content, it has antioxidants & flavonoids which enhances the activity of Vitamin C thereby helping to lower the risks of colon cancer, heart attack & stroke.

STRAWBERRY: Protective Fruit. Strawberries have the highest total antioxidant power among major fruits & protect the body from cancer-causing, blood vessels-clogging free radicals.

ORANGE : Sweetest medicine. Taking 2 - 4 oranges a day may help keep colds away, lower cholesterol, prevent & dissolve kidney stones as well as lessens the risk of colon cancer.

WATERMELON: Coolest Thirst Quencher Composed of 92% water, it is also packed with a giant dose of glutathione, which helps boost our immune system. They are also a key source of lycopene - the cancer fighting oxidant. Other nutrients found in watermelon are Vitamin C & Potassium.

GUAVA & PAPAYA:Top awards for Vitamin C. They are the clear winners for their high Vitamin C content. Guava is also rich in fiber,

which helps prevent constipation. Papaya is rich in carotene; this is good for your eyes.

Drinking Cold water after meal = Cancer. Can you believe this?For those who like to drink cold water, this article is applicable to you. It is nice to have a cup of cold drink after a meal. However, the cold water will solidify the oily stuff that you have just consumed. It will slow down the digestion. Once this 'sludge' reacts with the acid, it will break down and be absorbed by the intestine faster than the solid food. It will line the intestine.Very soon, this will turn into fats and lead to cancer. It is best to drink hot soup or warm water after a meal

Franklyn John and Anne were there. Franklyn is the nephew of late Rev.P.T.Yohannan, my Syriac teacher. Varghese Antony, son of Vengassery Antony master of Kuriachira School was there. Varghese's mother Kunjila teacher is the first cousin of Franklyn and niece of Rev.P. T. Yohannan. Varghese Antony was there with his wife and three children as well as mother-in-law.

After Holy Qurbana on 21 September I went to bless the house of Varghese Antony Vengassery and ate lunch there. Then in the evening he drove me to the house of Qasha George Bet Rasho. There was a dinner going on there. As there were so many people I sent Varghese to go and enquire whether that was the same house of Qasha George Bet Rasho. As a matter of fact I had stayed in that house during the previous visit in 2006. But in the evening it is difficult to see the house numbers written in front of the houses. I sent Varghese to make sure that it was the same house. Then I saw so many Assyrian friends.

The candidate who was going to contest the election for the city Council was there. As a matter of fact he is their sitting councilor and expected to win the election to the City Council. He has served our interest well in the past. It is very difficult for the Church to support one candidate or one political party. The Church members belong to two or more political parties. At the same time when a sitting member who had helped the Church in the past is contesting re- election he expects us to support him.

After 10 p.m. or so the Assyrian people eating and chatting at the pool side started to return to their homes. As I had a heavy day with Holy Qurbana etc I told Deacon Walter Rouel to take me to his home where I was staying. Qasha George Bet Rasho offered to come to take me to the airport next morning. He apologized that he did not get much time to spend with me as in the previous visit. He had interviewed me in the PARS TV programme during that time.

From Los Angeles airport I flew to San Jose on Monday 22nd September. Cor episcopa David Royal was at the airport to receive me. I stayed in the apartment where Cor episcopa was residing alone. I had celebrated Holy Qurbana in Mar Yosip Khananisho Church in San Jose on 18 July 2005. Many unfortunate things have happened in that church during the past 3 years.

In addition to the Assyrians I had a visit from Nitish John who is a Senior Staff, Software engineer in Good Technology Group of the famous Motorola Inc. in Santa Clara close to San Jose, California. Nitish is the son of Baby John, my maternal cousin. My mother's sister Ammini was married to Mr.P. C. John, who retired as Headmaster of High Schools at Kuruvilangad near Kottayam. Now Ammini is the only survivor of my mother's siblings. She is about 86 years of age. I had gone to Kuruvilangad to attend the wedding of Nitish John. It was a special wedding in that old Catholic Church because the bride was Chinese.

Nitish John was delighted in my visit to his apartment because I was the first one from his side who visited them after their first baby was born. His father Baby could not travel to USA from India, as he thinks he is old, although Baby is younger to me. We talked a lot about our family members. As I already had become a Metropolitan before Nitish was born, I did not have many occasions to meet him. Moreover my mother's sister Ammini was married to Mr. P. C. John who was a Roman Catholic. In my young days Kuruvilangad, an ancient Christian town, and about100 miles south of Trichur was part of another Kingdom called Travancore. After the Independence of India from the British in August 1947 the Cochin state was merged with Travancore. Later in 1957 Travancore-

Cochin state was formed into Kerala State on the linguistic basis. All people in Kerala about 30 million speak Malayalam, our mother tongue.

Harriet and Nitish took me to show the historic places around Santa Clara. Harriet was able to come with us because her mother was taking care of the baby. Nitish was just enrolled for a Ph.D. programme the day I visited him. He could work and study. He had done his Master degree in Engineering after he had taken his Engineering degree in Gujarat, India. But many Indians who did Master degree with him could not work in USA because the Sept. 11 bombing in New York made it difficult for foreigners to get a job in America. When his friends returned home Nitish John decided to struggle hard to stay on. Now he is glad that he made it. In afternoon he drove me to Mar Yousip Khananeesho Church where Cor episcopa David Royal was waiting.

I celebrated Holy Qurbana there on 28th September. Dr. Johny Nadakavukaren and wife Priya, living in Stockton drove a long way to attend Holy Qurbana. Biju, grandson of Kunnankada Deacon, was there like last time three years ago. Kunnankada Lonappen was my teacher in class 7 before he became a deacon. Biju's wife Sumi is the daughter of V.L. Johnson(Chief Manager in the South Indian Bank, Trichur). Her maternal grandfather David is the brother of late Bishop Poulose Mar Poulose. I was in their home in 2005 when their daughter Anne was celebrating her 2nd birthday. Biju Jose took me to the air port to travel to Phoenix, Arizona.

I visited Archdeacon Neenos Michael in his church in Sanfrancisco. I visited Bishop Mar Joseph Sargis who is undergoing Balloon operation for his heart. I stayed one day in Modesto in the house of Fr.Oshana Kanon, Vicar of our church in Ceres near Modesto. I talked over the phone with Patricia Splinter who had visited her father's uncle's tomb some 3 years ago in Trichur giving donations to the institutions founded to perpetuate the memory of her grand uncle.

It was a pleasure to talk to Mrs.Clara Mirigian who donated 500 dollars twice a year (for Easter and Christmas) to Mar Timotheus

Charitable Hospital in Kunnathumkara near Trichur. We talked about Fr. M.I. David of Trichur (now living in Cochin) who worked very hard in founding that Hospital. He will be celebrating his 90th birthday on April 20, 2009. He is now the oldest priest in our Church in India. In addition to the Mar Timotheus Charitable Hospital, Dr. Santhosham Home for the Aged is also situated in the same campus. More than 25 old people are residing there. Some of these people have money to support them either by own pension or by the help of their children. In modern times some children do not want to take care of their old ones. It is a sad situation. In such cases the old People Home is an answer in a partial way. We are trying to add some more rooms to that building to accommodate half a dozen people more.

This is the second major charitable institution founded in the name of Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan of Mar Bhisho who came to Trichur from Kochanes (Qudshanis) in Turkey in February 1908 and served the Indian Church till his death on 30 April 1945. The first institution is called Mar Timotheus Memorial Orphanage in Kalathode, which is within one mile from the other. I have a special love for that orphanage. It was my mother Mrs. J. D. Mooken who donated her own land for starting this Orphanage in Kalathode which takes care of more than 75 childrem (both boys and girls).

Mrs.Patricia Splinter, daughter of Dr. Eshai Kellaita, nephew of Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan, had visited me in Trichur in 2006. I felt my duty to inform her about my presence in San Jose. When I telephoned to her, she said," I am in airport to board a plane to Germany". She will be back only after one week. At that time I will be in Arizona. Thus I missed an opportunity to renew our contact.

Cor episcopa David Royal took care of me very well in the parsonage of our church in San Jose, which we got back after troubles and costly litigation for 2 years. Cor episcopa David Royal was promoted as Archdeacon and on 30 November 2008 was consecrated as Bishop (Episcopa) by the name of Mar Awa Rouel. He still lives in the same apartment where I stayed with him in September.

He drove me to Modesto and I stayed with Fr. Oshana Kanon who interviewed me on the Bet Nahrain Television run by Dr. Sargon Dadeesho at an international level, I had been interviewed in Bet Nahrain even before it started Television programme. Rev.Eshai Joseph M.A., my old friend, came for breakfast in the house of Qasha Oshana Kanon.

We were friends since 1967 when I first visited California to meet Deacon Yuash Kelaita, a cousin of Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan of Mar Bhisho who established the Assyrian parish in Chicago way back in 1925. Rev. Eshai Joseph had helped me to reprint the three volumes of Hudra in 1993. Now he is old, 88 or so. Yet he grows vegetable in his garden.

Fr. Oshana Kanon interviewed me on the Assyrian TV station Bet Nahrain. I think it was a weekly programme of the Church. It was well conducted. There were opportunities for the listeners to ask questions if they had any. "Kassi, I am Suzie, daughter of Eshaya Chemmani of Ealing. England". I instantly recognized her voice. She was small when I first stayed with Eshaya Chemanni in London. After her marriage she moved to San Francisco. She said that she would make to the church on the following Sunday. Her uncle Yosip Chemmani also called me over the phone. He kept his promise by coming to church when I celebrated Holy Qurbana in Phoenix, Arizona

As I began to walk in the public garden in front of the house of Fr. Oshana Kanon, Deacon Simon Amadin came to see me. He is from Jelu tribe. He had assisted me for Qurbana in Modesto Church. He gave me subscription to Voice of the East published from Trichur. I spend time in preparing **Voice of the East** once in two months. It keeps the world informed of what is happening in the Church of the East universally. I wish to make a better communication organ , if my friends in different parts of the world send e mails to me to keep me informed and I publish it for the world to be informed of what is happening in Assyrian Church of the East in Iraq, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, USA, Canada, Denmark, Sweden, England, Australia, New Zealand , India etc.

I made a visit to Bishop Mar Joseph Sargis who was resting after bye Pass surgery. He is living in Modesto. He left his diocese in Baghdad some six years ago along with his old mother. His mother passed away since then. He is not able to go back to Baghdad, as the political situation was not steady there. The Holy Synod has permitted him to stay in Modesto which has a good climate as well as many brave Assyrians from his tribe Jelu.

I told the Bishop that his relative Engineer Zai a Markus George was very helpful to me while I went to Sharjah for Holy Qurbana. Bishop told me that he is directly related to Mr. Zaia' wife rather than to Mr. Zaia. But I know that most of Assyrians are related before they were married. Marriage between second cousins and third cousins are common among the Assyrians. The opposite is true in India.

Zaia'a grandfather Pilathos was present in Baghdad during my consecration as Bishop in September 1968 more than 4 decades back. Bishop Joseph Sargis is the only other bishop among our 12 prelates whose beard is in competition with mine. His beard looks almost the same size as mine. Next to the Patriarch, Mar Sargis has more years as a prelate in our Church. He was consecrated bishop in 1967 as a teenager to succeed Mar Isho Sargis who died in England in December 1966. He was the last one to be consecrated in the hereditary succession, during the last 40 years in our Church of the East. Now the consecration of bishops is by the decision of the Holy Synod after proper investigation.

Cor episcopa David Royal and I tried to inform Biju Jose and Sumi in that parish that I would be celebrating Holy Qurbana on 28th September in the Mar Yosip Khananisho Church in San Jose. Unfortunately they had moved from the place I was staying with them in my previous visit two years earlier. I contacted my sister Leela to get the phone number of Anina, a second cousin of Biju Jose. When I called Anina (daughter of Fr. Lazar Madathumpadi, my priest in Trichur) she told me that Biju Jose had moved out of California state. She did not have their current phone number.

I called Dr. John Nadakavukaren and his wife Priya and asked them whether they could make it to the Holy Qurbana on Sunday

morning. They are living in Stockton at a distance of two hours drive from San Jose. Moreover Dr. John had to attend the hospital by 5 p.m. I told them that if they do not come there will not be any Indian attending the Holy Qurbana. So they made it. Dr. John's cousin sister's son Dr.Davy Emmatty M.Sc., Ph.D. (Tomato expert) had some other engagement that day.

During Holy Qurbana I saw one Indian couple in the congregation and another Indian couple in another side. I was happy that Biju and Sumi, I was trying to contact for three days somehow knew of my presence and reached for attending Holy Qurbana. They took me to their house in Cupertino close to San Jose on Sunday afternoon.

After Holy Qurbana many people wanted to meet me and take photo with me. The meeting hall was being prepared by the Women's society for their annual sale to collect money for ACERO (Assyrian Church of the East Relief Organization) recently formed with Bishop Mar Meelis as Chairman and cor-episcopa David Royal as secretary The trearurer is Andy Darmo in England.. I was supposed to eat breakfast in the house of the Chairman of the Church committee. So we went with Cor episcopa David Royal and the Indian family in Cupertino I was to stay that day. Cor episcopa had to go to London, England that evening to have meeting of ACERO.

From the house of Biju and Sumi I managed to telephone to Joy Mulakkan whose house I had blessed during my previous visit to San Jose. Through Mrs. Saje Mulakkan I was able to get the telephone number of Mr. Z. Kuruvilla where I had stayed in a previous visit. I was happy to talk to Mrs.Sara and their son Dr.Kiran Kuruvilla, who had studied in Christian Medical College, Vellore, South India under the sponsorship of our Church. I wanted to talk with Mittu Thimothy from our Bombay parish who lives with her family. I had visited her in a previous visit. But I could not trace her phone number.

Biju dropped me at the airport on Monday morning. Sumi gave me a bottle of 325 vitamins called CENTRUM, a Multivitamin/ Multimineral Supplement, Balanced & Complete from A to Zinc. She perhaps knew an old man like me needed a vitamin like that to

keep going strong. She is the granddaughter of K.A.David, elder brother of late Bishop Poulose Mar Poulose. I thank God for the good friends around the world who care for me. Unfortunately do not get time to keep contact with them, except during my hectic travels.

Cor episcopa David Royal tried his best to see that I get my Iraq visa from the Iraqi embassy in Washington D.C. while I was with him in San Jose. He too had to get a visa to Iraq to attend our Holy Synod as a recording Secretary of the proceedings the Holy Synod. Since he was an Assyrian born in America he required a visa. Bishop Aprim Khamis did not require an Iraq visa, as he was born in Iraq and had to come to USA after he had become a bishop in 1973.

As I needed my passport for showing in the check-in time in the airport for going from San Jose to Phoenix, Arizona I decided that it was wise to keep my passport with me till I reached Phoenix. As soon as I reached Phoenix we went to Fed Express office and sent it to the Consular section of the Iraqi Embassy in Washington D.C. Still my worry was not over. The Passport was not returned to me one day after I left Arizona to Chicago. Therefore I had to take a Driver's license valid for one week. I was not allowed to drive any vehicle. Because I did not know to drive a car or even a two wheeler. In my college days I used to ride on an ordinary bicycle,

The purpose of that license issued from the Motor vehicle inspector was for identification purpose. The Motor Vehicle license office issued this card after checking my documents verifying my age etc. There was no fee for this Drivers license. I am still keeping it after the purpose was over and the one week validity had expired. I have no intention to learn driving; still I keep an evidence of my desire to learn driving when I was a young boy.

My travel agent told me that I have to go to Turkey and fly via Istanbul to Kurdistan area. The place I wanted to land was Erbil. The travel agent did not know a place called Erbil. Although I had gone to Iraq five times in 1962, 1968, 1977, 1984, 1990, I had not visited Erbil or Duhok. The northeast part I visited was in Mosul in 1962 when Abdul Karim Kassim was the military ruler and in 1990

when Saddam Hussein was the President.

After enquiry about Erbil to many people I was asked to log on to **Erbilairport.net**. To my pleasant surprise I get a lot of information from this website. Erbil is a modern airport. The information on the website is copied later in the chapter on Erbil for the benefit of the readers who may not take the trouble to log on to this website. I used the VIP building for arrival and departure. As the Honorable Finance Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government Mr.Sarkis Ahajhan is a member of our Church I had VIP privileges in the airport.

We got information that the Iraq Embassy was willing to grant my visa in the Embassy in Washington D C., so we decided to send the original Passport to the Iraqi Embassy in Washington D.C. As I had to fly from San Jose to Phoenix the next day I decided to go to Phoenix and post the passport to Washington, D.C. by Fed Express.

Before I left I knew that the title of Cor-episcopa David Royal will be short soon. The word "Cor" will disappear soon. It happened two months later. On 30th November 2008 he became episcopa in Modesto, California, after becoming Archdeacon David Royal for a week. When I first met Deacon David Royal in 1996 in Mar Gevarghese Cathedral in Chicago, I had guessed that this 21 year old young deacon will be a leader soon. He was a student for B. A, in Loyola University, Chicago that time.

David Royal was born in 1975 in Chicago, Illinois. His Grace is the first Assyrian bishop ever ordained that was born in United States. ACOE's well-educated new bishop holds a BA degree from Loyola University in Chicago (1997), Bachelor of Sacred Theology from University of St. Mary of the Lake in Mundelein, Chicago (1999), License of Sacred Theology from Pontifical Oriental University in Rome (2001), and Doctorate of Sacred Theology from Pontifical Oriental University in Rome (2007). In his speech His Grace Dr. Mar Awa promised progress in the California Diocese. The name "Awa" means father in Assyrian, and California's Assyrians will look forward for Mar Awa's youthful but mature leadership.

Chapter 3

Phoenix (Arizona)

It was my second visit to Arizona. It is a developing state. Some people say Phoenix city in Arizona State will be as big as Chicago city in a short time. Many Assyrians have moved from Chicago to Phoenix. It has a warmer climate Indians and the Assyrians are finding at home with the weather in Phoenix much better than the windy and chilly Chicago.

In Phoenix, Arizona Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis and cor epispcopa Frederick had received me in the airport. I stayed with Dr. Francis Murad and his family. Juliet Kasha is the elder sister of his wife Dr. Shalet. Bishop Poulose Mar Poulose and I had stayed in the house of Rabbi Juliet Kasha in 1997 during the Holy Synod in Chicago. At that time one day Dr. Shalet came there to see her old mother. Her daughter Nohra was a baby. Juliet had helped financially our Mar Timotheus Charitable Hospital in the past.

The friend of the Indian Church, retired High School teacher Mrs. Juliet Kasha, have moved from Chicago to Scottsdale in Phoenix after her retirement from High School teaching. She is a couple of years younger to me. She bought a house nearer to the house of her younger sister Shalet. And moved there leaving her house to her son Ramsen and his wife.

Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis invited me to visit Grand Canyon. But I declined the invitation, as he had taken me there in my previous visit. We did not think of visiting another neighbouring place that is Las Vegas, as that city known as the Sin City has reputation for gambling. As I was writing this travelogue, I happened to read the news about a sign board in a bus between Las Vegas and Grand Canyon.

An interesting sign inside the bus between Las Vegas and Grand Canyon reads:

"We reserve the right/

To refuse service to anyone/Regardless of who you are, /

Who you think you are, /

Who your Daddy is, or/

How much money you have."

Thus, on a single visit to Las Vegas, you have the satisfaction of being in several famous cities at one go.

The New Sunday Express. February 1, 2009

Dr. Francis Murad's niece Najiba lives very near to the house I was staying. Najiba sounds like a Muslim name to Indians like me. She is a much dedicated Assyrian. Her husband is a deacon in our Church. They both run a restaurant. This year she is the boss I think. Formerly he was the boss.

It was my privilege to meet the daughters of Archdeacon Kaku Lazar who had taught me Aramaic language in Trichur in 1956 to 1958 while he was a deacon. On 2nd March 1958 Deacon Kaku Lazar Malpan returned to Iraq after teaching Aramaic in our Seminary in India since 1956. Yokhania David, a young Assyrian student, had come with Malpan Kaku Lazar in the same ship from Basrah to Bombay to study in the Seminary. Unfortunately his health failed and he was sent back, at the advice of the doctor. That young man with beautiful voice died soon after his return to Lebanon.

After Malpan Kaku Lazar became a priest and I had the privilege of staying with him in Baghdad in 1962, while he was the parish priest of Mar Zaia Cathedral in Karradat Mariam, Baghdad. Archdeacon Kaku Lazar had passed away before the unity of two calendar groups took place in India in November 1995. But Julia, the wife of late Archdeacon Kaku Lazar, was happy to see me in Mar Sargis Church, Chicago in 1996. Now I was sad to hear about the passing away of Julia from Alexandra and the other daughters I met in Phoenix.

On 5th October I celebrated Holy Qurbana in the new church. It is more spacious than the previous church where I had celebrated Holy Qurbana two years earlier. The new church is not a tall building. It is a single storeyed edifice. The committee decided not to

to spend money for extravaganza and showing to the neighbours. The church has enough space for all people to stand and attend Holy Qurbana comfortably. There is a hall, and a book store. I was told that there are plans for building some 50 homes for senior citizens. That is a good idea. If they live near to the church they can walk in to the church on Sunday morning rather than wait for somebody to give a lift to them to attend the church service. The priest also can easily visit these people. If each one is looking for land to purchase it will be in different areas. So I hope priests and bishops in different parts of the world will have a vision to provide housing for the people in the same neighborhood close to the church. I also prefer the priests and the bishops to reside inside or close to the church compound.

The priest can just walk to the church building without a car. It is cheaper. It is also better for parishioners to meet the priest. In Roman Catholic churches the priests always reside in the church compound, as they are unmarried. In Orthodox and Protestant churches where many priests are married, some churches cannot find a house for the family to reside in the church compound. Some people do not like the idea of girls, daughters of the priests, playing or walking in the church compound. They think that church compound is for the Angels to walk.

This is not a new idea. When Mart Mariam Cathedral in Trichur was built around 1814 AD, The King of Cochin state had built two rows of house for the 52 families he had brought form the neibouring villages to improve commerce in his small kingdom. It was a good idea. When they hear the bell ringing in the church summoning people to prayer they could walk to the church. In the mornings and evenings when the church bells ring people pray family prayers in their homes. Mar Thoma Shleeha church in Pattikad also had two rows of houses in front of the Church. When new land rules came in 1968 or so all those houses became the property of the persons living. Some of these new owners sold it to Roman Catholics or others and made money.

We have in Sydney, Australia 58 houses are being built for senior citizens around Mart Mariam Church, Sydney. The buildings were to be ready before the end of this year. The people do not have to walk to the churches. They can just sit in their homes and listen and even see the Holy Qurbana from their own homes. The homes are so close to the church building. There is no open space.

Phoenix had just one parish. A new congregation is formed as Mar Joseph Parish. Qasha Kando Kando (In Malayalam it means: Did you see, Did you see?) who had assisted me for Holy Qurbana in Orange County Parish and later in Mar Zaia Church, Modesto is the priest of this young parish. It is in Chandler. Let us hope and pray that in near future the Assyrians will have enough people to make it a strong parish. Qasha Kando's wife is the sister of Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis.

Susan, a young lady singing in the choir in Chandler came to see me. She said some 12 years ago when I visited her parish in Chicago, Mar Sargis Church (which was a cathedral in the days of late Patriarch H.H. Mar Eshai Shimun) she was a young member in the choir. My fist visit to that parish impressed her because as I walked into that church I smiled at the choir members and played their organ. That reminded me that these years I have not done it. We have to win the young people closer to the Church by our actions and words.

Later I understood that Chandler is the part of the Phoenix city where Indians have built churches for the Mar Thoma Church and Syrian Orthodox Church. Brother –in-law of my nephew Sanil Mooken works in the Marriot Hotel and lives in Chandler. I did not know his address until after I left Phoenix area. He and his wife are the members of the Syrian Orthodox Church under Metropolitan Eldo Mar Titos, under obedience to Patriarch His Holiness Mar Zaka Iwas of Damascus, Syria.

There is a website for our Mar Yousip Assyrian parish in Chandler. I reproduce the letter of the parish priest from website,

Message from Father Kando,

Chandler—Arizona

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This message is for all of my beloved brothers and sisters, members of the Mar Yousip Parish in Chandler, AZ.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your great support and involvement in the Parish affairs, spiritually and financially, throughout 2008 and having the motivation to keep your faith alive.

Also, I would like to extend my best wishes to you and your family for the up coming New Year, praying that God will watch over each one of you, as He watched over our People of Nineveh, 2871 years ago.

For the year 2009, I would appreciate your continued involvement in Sunday service, (Qurbana Qadeesha), Bible Study, and Assyrian Language Classes.

As you know, in Mar Yousip Parish our great objective of both social service and evangelism is to bring God into the lives of each and every member. The purpose of both is the redemption of our Assyrian society. These two methods of work are not only parallel but complementary and interrelated. The Christian message produces the spirit which makes community service possible and community service is brought to perfection when it wins men, women, and children to faith in Christ within the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East tradition, and produces a Christian social order for them to live in.

Let us pray to achieve this endeavor once again, all together, as it is the will of Christ, for the glory of God and His Church. May the Lord bless you and yours forever. Amen.

Father Kando D. Kando

A young boy from this parish Andrew Aziz is sending e mails to me asking many questions. He wants to be a deacon in our Church. Later he sent me a picture of his father Awiqam standing next to

Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, when the Patriarch was about 18 or 20 years of age.

After I wrote the above paragraph I received e mail from the young Andrew Aziz that he was going to be ordained a Qaroya on June 21 along with his father who is going to be ordained a deacon along with a Doctor. I feel that the young Andrew Aziz has a bright future in the Assyrian Church of the East in Arizona.

Chapter 4

Chicago, Dallas and New York

From Phoenix, Arizona I flew to Chicago on Monday 6th October, 2008. I showed my temporary Identity Card, as my Passport had not reached me from Iraqi Embassy in Washington, USA. I had hesitation in my mind about the troubles I may have with security purposes. To my surprise I learned that the passenger seated next to me was also having a similar ID card, as she had no driver's license or passport. She told me that she was going to act in Jerry Springer's show on TV for one day. I asked her whether the fights between young couples shown on their show were real. She said, 'We have to fake them. My boy friend and I will think about some imaginary fight between us and act out on the show."

I told her that I have traveled several times on airplane. It was my 55th. trip or so. With an average of 6 flights in each journey I may have taken at least 330 flights. She asked, "Is traveling your job?" I smiled and replied, "No, traveling is not my job. I travel in order to visit our Assyrian Churches throughout the world and conduct service in Aramaic language and preach to them in English."

When I reached Chicago's O'Hare international airport, my sister Leela's daughter Dr. Asha Alex Furlow was waiting for me. As she knows that the domestic airlines had stopped giving food in the flight except peanuts and a soft drink, she had brought a vegetable salad. It was good because I had to wait another hour in the airport to meet our Catholicos Patriarch His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV who was returning after a seven week Apostolic visit in Europe.

There were a lot of people waiting for the arrival of the Patriarch. I was happy to meet Archdeacon Shlemon Hesqiel, cor episcopa Dr.George Toma, Fr.Dr. Petros Petros, Fr.Antwan Latchin, Fr.Dr.William Toma and other lay leaders. I was coming to Chicago after a gap of two years. After meeting with His Holiness I asked permission to go with Dr. Asha, my niece. We had to rush home, as Asha's children, Sophie and Williams were with a babysitter. Asha's husband Paul was on a business tour for two days. It is illegal to

leave children under 12 years of age unattended. At the same time it is expensive to engage babysitters. Some poor people leave children alone at home. But if the neighbours come to know about it, they will telephone to police and complain. This is for the safety of the children in case of sickness, or fire or burglary.

Asha's new house has all facilities. She had a lift (elevator) from basement to kitchen then to bed room and finally to guest room. Asha said that I could use this small lift to go up and use the staircase to come down. This is what her mother does. Although I am four years younger than my sister, I decided to imitate her. I knew that exercise was a must for my diabetes, avoided climbing staircases, as my eyesight may fail me to see the correct step. Nowadays I am careful to climb the steps.

Although my stay with my niece was comfortable, my brother's son, Sanil Mooken and his wife Maria insisted that I stay with them too. He had married in April 2007 and bought an apartment in Chicago. On Saturday October 11, 2008 I moved to his apartment. The next day we had to go the St. John Assyrian Church. Sanil and his wife Maria are attending that church regularly, as it is an English speaking congregation.

When Sanil Mooken first came to Chicago to work after his Engineering degree in Information Technology from Cochin University I introduced him to our Catholicos Patriarch His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV in Morton Grove in the suburb of Chicago. Sanil was working in Skokie near there.

His Holiness asked Sanil what church he would attend. As he said that he did not know Assyrian language and he does not find any non-Assyrian in our Mar Gewargis Church where he had come once. His Holiness suggested that he could attend St. Johns Assyrian Church and also make acquaintance with Fr.Charles Klutz, our English speaking priest. I introduced Sanil to Fr. Klutz and later sent an e mail to him asking him to keep close contact with this young man, as he was very active in Church activities in India. He was a Sunday school teacher. Actually Fr. Klutz did more than I asked for. He wrote to me that my nephew was such a fine gentleman. so I should

ordain him as a deacon, as a loan from the Indian Church to Chicago Church. I replied him that in India people have hesitations to become a priest or deacon. I also feel that one should become a deacon, only if he has a call from God to serve the Church.

I am glad that Sanil is keeping his interest in that third generation Assyrian Church. I was happy that although Sanil married from the Syrian Orthodox Church in India both of them are regular in attending Sunday Qurbana in our St.Johns Assyrian Church. Even after Fr.Klutz retired from the church having attained the retirement age, their friendship continues.

I telephoned to my classmate in Trichur T.P.Lazar and his wife Ammini informing them that I was going to celebrate Holy Qurbana in St. Johns Assyrian Church. They also came to attend the Holy Qurbana in such a short notice. I contacted Mr.Santhosh and Sumathi Nadakavukaren working in Chicago. Unfortunately he had gone for a vacation of one month just one day before I called. I had conducted their wedding in Trichur in May1996 and baptized their second baby in Mar Gevarghese Cathedral in Chicago. Their first baby was also baptized in the same church, by our Assyrian priest Fr.George Toma.

On Sunday12 th October I celebrated Holy Qurbana in St. Johns Church. I had first celebrated in that church on Easter day, April 10, 1977 according to the old Julian calendar.Archdeacon Sadok de Mar Shimun was the parish priest. Actually Bishop Poulose Mar Poulose had conducted the consecration of the altar of that church after some renovation in 1974 or so.

At that time this church was considered to be under Patriarch Mar Addai II. I must record that Archdeacon Sadok de Mar Shimun was one of the influential people who wrote to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to give a temporary Passport to Mar Thoma Darmo in 1968 when Mar Thoma Darmo was the Metropolitan of India and had renounced his Syrian citizenship in order to obtain the Indian Citizenship.

I was happy to see the cotton Qurbana cassock made in India in the vestry. Fr.Klutz told me that he did not know whose it was.

Bishop Poulose Mar Poulose had left it in that Church when the Bishop was doing his Ph.D. in Berkeley, California,

After the death of Archdeacon Sadok de Mar Shimun Bishop Mar Aprem Khamis took care of that parish and appointed Fr. Charles Klutz as the Vicar. Archdeacon Sadok de Mar Shimun who was a 3rd or 4th cousin of Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimon was independent of any Bishop. He used to consider late Bishop Mar Esho Sargis of Jelu as his superior. In 1977 when I was his guest for Easter he requested me to ordain a member of his parish named Petros as a deacon. When I went to that church in 1996 I understood that the deacon I ordained in 1977 had passed away. If my memory is correct, he is the only Assyrian I ordained in USA. Later in 2002 I ordained an Indian named Thomas Mathew as a priest in the same church. Unfortunately he was absorbed by his own Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church in Chicago.

Most of the clergy throughout the world stay in the same denomination in which they were ordained. At the time there are a few who left their own Church and seek to serve other Churches. The reasons for this phenomenon are different in many cases. I think that only less than one percent of the clergy leave like that. Some will say that their old Church was no good. They will say that the Bishops who ordained them were bad. And they wanted to escape.

Fr. Klutz had assisted me for Holy Qurbana during my visits from 1996 to 2006. But now although retired, he would have come to the church to assist me. He telephoned to me and told me that he had planned a visit to his relatives on those dates to Canada. So I missed the opportunity to meet him. Later in March 2009 when he heard about my surgery from my nephew Sanil he sent me an e mail which expresses his love and concern for me.

Christ Jesus is among us!

Glorify HIM forever and ever: Amen

Beloved Archbishop Mar Aprem

Beseeching our worshipful Lord for your continued recovery and the best of health. Sanil has requested the faithful of St John Church to offer prayer intentions before our Lord Jesus for your recovery following the recent surgical procedure. Mrs. Klutz and I are very concerned about your health and your recovery from the procedure.

God is with us, HIS mercies surround us daily.

Fr. Antwan Latchin is the new Vicar. I have known Fr. Antwan Latchin ever since I visited Sweden in 1997. Bishop Odisho Oraham of Europe had asked Fr.Antwan to drive me to places and to attend to my comfort while I was in Sweden, He did that job admirably. We are close friends. In recent years he is the Secretary living in the Patriarchal Residence in Morton Grove, Chicago. I reached the church before the priest arrived. The members of the congregations were very happy to see me again. We had breakfast in the basement as usual.

Deacons were doing their duties in English while Fr. Antwan will be saying the prayers in Aramaic. Though the English hymns are missing in the new St. John's Church, Fr.Klutz used to enjoy singing those English hymns with the choir members. I also used to enjoy those hymns which I used in the Leonard Theological College Choir, Jabalpur when I was studying there half a century ago.

I understood from my nephew Sanil Mooken that Fr.Antwan Latchin is a close friend of the young people of this parish. He also runs the radio programme. He interviewed me in this radio pragramme. Dr.Asha calculated half an hour to reach the radio station at 2100 Lee Street, Evanston, Illinois 60202 from her residence where I was residing. But the traffic delayed our journey. Mr. Misha, the photographer who took 8000 pictures during the Patriarch's trip abroad was waiting outside the Radio Station. He ushered me in. I just made it a few minutes before we went on air. It is important that we have to be there when the broadcast is alive on the air. I gave him the CD of my 16 Malayalam songs recently recorded in India by the dedicated service of my secretary Fr. Lijo Raphael.

I told them that they cannot copy that CD as there is some lock. I did not deliberately ask for it. But the people in Singapore who made 1000 copies for us saw to it that nobody makes pirated copies. Fr. Antwan said that he knows young people who can crack the lock. When somebody does something somebody else will devise some things to manipulate according to their wish. As I have no plan to make money by selling my devotional songs I have no plan to go to court against pirated versions of my songs. Fr. Antwan promised to broadcast some of my Malayalam songs in future also.

Adnan David living at 9745 N.Keystone, Skokie, Illinois 60076 telephoned to me to India ordering Hudra prayer books printed in India. He told that his late father Ezaria David was a friend of mine. I remembered visiting him in his home during a previous visit to Chicago. He has been reading my magazine **Voice of the East.** Anyhow after reaching Chicago I decided to inform Adnan David who is a licensed Electrician (A & A Electric), of my arrival in the city. He promised to come the following Sunday to the church to attend the service, but also invited me to spend a day with him. So I was happy to go to his house. He had invited his friends and relatives for the sumptuous supper which his wife Amal had cooked. Assyrian food is delicious. But I am afraid to eat good food due to the fear of the increase of my weight. It is 76 Kilograms more than my legs can carry. The next day I went to visit the schools where his two sons were studying.

On 19th October I assisted the Patriarch His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV in celebrating Holy Qurbana in the St. George Cathedral in Boulevard near Tuihy and Ashland in Chicago. We both distributed Holy Qurbana to people. After His Holiness left the cathedral I was allowed to do what I wanted. H.H. asked Fr.Dr.Patros Patros to be with me. After the breakfast I talked with Fr. Lawrance Namato and his wife. I had no time to visit Detroit in this trip. But I promised that I would try to visit Detroit in the next trip.

Then I said good bye to the clergy and joined my niece Dr.Asha and nephew Sanil and went into the Bookstore to look for my books.

My little book **Laugh with the Bishop** now in its 8th edition was there. The book I wrote the Biography of the Catholicos Patriarch also was there. Some more copies of that well known book are available in the second edition with the publisher Mar Narsai Press in Trichur.

I went to the house of Sanil. In the afternoon Sanil took me to Patriarchal Residence in Morton Grove before 4 p.m. I traveled with the Patriarch in the same car when we went to Dinner reception. During that long ride I could talk with the Catholicos Patriarch some news about our Church in India. His Holiness is looking forward to a visit to the Indian Church. I decided not to drink soup, tea or water to avoid the need for visiting wash room. So I managed myself until the reception was over. I went with Sanil and Maria and made telephone calls to the Travel Agent in Cochin about my ticket to Kurdistan.

In addition to the Catholicos Patriarch I was the main speaker in the dinner meeting. I was careful not to speak for too long, because the Assyrians come to this annual dinner of the Patriarchal consecration on October 1 7 or the nearest Sunday evening to listen to their beloved *Kassi,* i.e, Mar Dinkha IV. I used some words from the song I heard during the meeting *Gabbara d umthan* and *Qaddisha de ethan.*

I chanted with the Indian words Jai Jai Jai which means Hail Hail Hail or Long Live:

Gabbara d umthan Jai Jai Jai uQaddisha d ethan Jai Jai Jai

It means,"the Mighty one of our nation and Holy One of our Church Hail Hail Hail."

Several Assyrians remarked in surprise "Oh You can sing also". Yes I have sung in many places. I am aware of my limitation. Still I feel that the children of God should sing for the Lord. I was a member of the choir in Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur when I was doing B.D. degree course there. I was a member of the Choir in the United Theological College, Bangalore when I was studying for M.Th. degree in 1964 to 66. The difference was that while I was singing *alto* in Jabalpur, I was singing *tenor* in Bangalore. Those

who know music will say that it is very difficult for a person to make a change like this. I know it was easy for me, as I did not know difference between alto and tenor.

A special item during the dinner was the announcement regarding the nomination of the Doctorate to be conferred on His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV. Our Catholicos Patriarch did not have many years of formal schooling. In a young age he moved to live with Mar Yosip Khananeesho Metropolitan in Harir, which was near the village of Darbandoki where the young boy named Khannania was born in 1935. Mar Yosip Metropolitan too had learned from his uncle Mar Isaac Khananisho Metropolitan who died in 1918 after the First World War, who in turn, had learned from his uncle Mar Yosip Khananeesho Metropolitan. They all belonged to the Nochiya tribe.

Mar Yosip Metropolitan, who groomed Khannania, was a great scholar and poet. Mar Yosip Metropolitan was a bishop for 5 years and a Metropolitan for 58 long years. I do not think anybody can break these records. The second place in long service to the Church as prelate goes to Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun for 54 years as Patriarch, which is also difficult to be broken. Perhaps the present Catholicos Patriarch, now in 47th year as prelate, may break that record.

St. Andrews is the fifth parish in the Chicago Metropolitan area. I was looking for information about this congregation. I had heard that they have shifted from the church in Maryville Academy in Des Planes where I had celebrated two times in the past. While in Chicago I did not get time to gather correct information. Then I saw in India in internet that there is a magazine called **Seeds of Faith, Christmas 2008** which is a Youth ministry publication of St. Andrews parish, Chicago. I think that this is the only parish in Assyrian Church of the East which has the name of St. Andrew or *Andreos*.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
ORIENTAL INSTITUTE
CHICAGO . ILLINOIS . 60637

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

1155 EAST FIFTY-EIGHTH STREET
TELEPHONE : 773-702-4098
FAX : 773-702-9853
E-MAIL : gstein@uchicago.edt

October 17, 2008
Provost Thomas Rosenbaum
Admin 501 - University of Chicago
Chicago, IL 60637

Dear Provost Rosenbaum -

I am writing to you in my capacity as Director of the Oriental Institute to nominate Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Holy Apostolic (Catholic) Assyrian Church of the East for an honorary degree at the University of Chicago. His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV is the spiritual leader of more than two million congregants in the Assyrian Church of the East - the most ancient Christian community in the world. The Assyrian Christians of the Church of the East are the last remaining people who speak Assyrian Aramaic, and preserve a literature and culture that has lasted for two thousand years in Iraq, North Syria, southeast Turkey, and Iran. Over a thousand years ago, the Assyrian Church of the East spread Christianity far into Asia and south Asia, so that even today there are Churches of this rite as far east as India, China, Japan, and Indonesia.

This ancient community has been terribly buffered by the tumultuous events of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, suffering massacre, exile, the suppression of cultural identity in its ancient Near Eastern homeland, and struggle to survive as a community of faith in a world-wide diaspora. The churches,

monasteries, and schools of the Assyrian Church of the East have preserved the precious heritage of Syriac/Assyrian language and literature. Syriac speaking philosophers and theologians played and enormous but little known role in preserving the greatest writings of classical antiquity - Greece and Rome - by translating the works of some of the world's greatest thinkers such as Aristotle. Many of the most important works of classical antiquity only survived because they were preserved in Syriac translation. We at the Oriental Institute are honored to be playing a role in the preservation of this body of knowledge though Syriac/Assyrian manuscript project, which is digitizing over 100,000 pages of Syriac/Assyrian manuscripts dating from the 6th through the 19th century AD.

Community language, literature, religion, and identity - all these are intertwined, and all are incredibly fragile. The nexus that unites these strands is the Holy Apostolic Catholic (Assyrian) Church of the East and its Patriarch - quite literally the peer and equivalent of the Pope in the Catholic Church. For the last 32 years, Mar Dinkha IV has played the single most important role in holding this community together, in preserving its unique heritage, and in insuring the Assyrian culture, language and identity are passed on to the next generation through schools and other cultural programs. The world's most ancient Christian community and civilization not only survives in adversity, but actually flourishes, through his efforts. For his crucial role in this process, I am happy to nominate Mar Dinkha IV for an honorary degree at our university.
Sincerely,



Gil J. Stein, Ph.D
Director of the Oriental Institute and Professor of Near eastern Archaeology

St. Andrews parish in Chicago bought a place of worship by the end of 2008. I was looking for more details of the same. And finally I got it from the internet.

Jews, Assyrians Share Worship Space

Bnai Jehoshua Beth Elohim Jewish congregation at Glenview, Chicago made an arrangement with the Assyrian Church of the East. The Jewish worship will continue until their new home in Deerfield will be ready within some months. Cor episcopa Dr. George Toma as well as Marc Swatewz, executive Director of the BJBE congregation think that this new arrangement was working better than they imagined.

The church owns the building at 901 Milwaukee Ave. but is leasing it in its entirety to the synagogue. A shared-use agreement spells out when the church is allowed to use portions of the facility.

But "the reality is we like each other very much and there's enough room in the building for both of us," Swatez said.

"Actually," Toma said, "I can say we put the contract aside and there's a contract of love and respect."

Logistics

BJBE Rabbi Karyn Kedar had expected the sharing arrangement to be bittersweet, especially because the church's symbols and faith objects were put into an altar that replaced the ark where the torah scrolls had been housed. The scrolls are now kept in storage, and placed under a makeshift tabernacle during religious services.

A tabernacle was used as a sanctuary for the Ark of the Covenant by Jews wandering in the desert after fleeing from Egyptian bondage, Kedar said.

"It shows how both difficult and sacred the temporariness is," she said. The analogy wasn't lost on Toma, who told Kedar that his parishioners had also been wandering with a tabernacle until they found their home.

Formed in 2000, the St. Andrew parish moved its Bible study classes from basements to rented rooms in community centers in Mount

Prospect and Des Plaines, and, for a while, space at Maryville Academy in Des Plaines. Plans in 2004 to build a church at Shermer and Old Willow roads in Northbrook were abandoned because of the high cost, Toma said.

But the parish had raised enough money through walks, rallies, parties and breakfasts for the down payment on BJBE's 30,772-square-foot building, he said. "It's a beautiful place. It has everything we need: a fellowship hall, classrooms, a big parking lot," Toma said.

What's in future? Toma said St. Andrew parish, the fifth for Assyrians in the Chicago area, is expected to draw from the more than 2,000 Assyrian families in communities surrounding Glenview.

The foundation walls for BJBE's new synagogue, meanwhile, have started to rise at Lake-Cook Road and Pine Street in Deerfield. The new building will include a 613-seat main sanctuary, which will overlook an interior courtyard, a social hall that seats 1,110 and eventually a 27,000-square-foot school wing.The church can't make major changes to the former BJBE facility until the synagogue moves out in October or November of 2009, Toma said. Until then, the synagogue worship services take place on Friday nights and Saturday mornings and the church holds services on Sundays.

"What's interesting is I believe more than 50 percent of what they read on Fridays, we read on Sundays," Toma said. "We also use the Old Testament, the prophets and the Books of Moses. It's amazing: two different ethnic groups worshipping God in one place in a period of 24 hours."

The church is now starting a Bible study class on Friday night, while the synagogue conducts Sabbath services. Both religious entities have joined forces on programs that feed the homeless and teach English to adults and children. "This began as a financial arrangement, and we have now found friends and allies in our work together," Kedar said.

On Monday 20 October 2008 Sabah Yokhanna from Detroit parish came to see me and take me out to lunch. Actually as soon as he

heard that I had gone to USA he telephoned to me that and promised to come to California to meet me. So I knew that he would travel to Chicago to meet me personally. Ever since I visited Detroit a few years ago he had become my instant friend. He is an electrician and helped in the electrical works of the new church in Detroit as his donation. He wanted me to visit Detroit in the next trip.

In 1958 October **Voice of the East** we read the report about our Church in America written by Dr. Dorothy Chacko, wife of Deacon Dr. C.J. Chacko who was the deacon with Mar Abimalek Timotheos Metropolitan in 1924 when he ordained Samuel David Neesan as Qashisha in 1924 in Chicago.

Dr.Dorothy Chacko writes: p 195

The situation in our Church in America is full of problems. We have only four churches, one in Turlock on the Pacific coast, near where His Holiness is now living. The "nearest" church to that is the one in Chicago, 2000 miles further east. Some 150 miles northeast from Chicago, is a church in Flint, Michigan, and almost a thousand miles from that is the one in New Britain. About 8000 members of our community live in these four centers, and some 4000 more are scattered in other cities consequently our people tend to worship in nearer churches, and the young folks marry into other groups. Three priests and the Archdeacon and several deacons comprise the clergy, but all are over forty years of age, men who were consecrated in the Middle East. The younger men are not coming forward, seeing no future in our Church.

I must write 50 years later now that the Church in America has a lot of deacons. His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV had ordained dozens of deacons. There is no room inside the altar for all deacons to stand. Therefore they stand in the choir and sing. Some Assyrian churches in America have more than one priest and a dozen deacons. The male members of our Church in America show interest to serve in the altar.

Dallas, Texas

When my niece, Mrs. Anne Jacob of Plano near Dallas heard about my visit to USA she asked me when I was going to visit her. I had visited her twice before. Anne whom we call Maya is the daughter of my second sister Sushila who lives in England. I had given house baptism to her and her twin sister Tresa along with their elder brother Varkey (Varghese) in August 1966 when I was going to study in Union Theological Seminary, New York City. That was 42 years ago. Then I baptized all three of them later in Mart Mariam Cathedral in Trichur when they came to India in 1977 or so.

I told Maya that I did not have much time to spare to make a trip to Dallas from Chicago. Moreover, since we Assyrians did not have a church in Dallas or anywhere in Texas, I did not find an excuse to visit my niece. She and her husband George Jacob insisted that I should visit them at least for one day, if I could not spare three days. There were four families of our Church for me to visit in Dallas. Luckily I got the visa to go to Iraq while I was in Chicago. Therefore I cancelled my plan to return to India to apply for Iraq visa.

On 15th October I flew from Chicago to Dallas airport. As I had not included Dallas in my schedule I had no ticket for that trip. Maya told me that she would arrange my ticket. Then she said that she would arrange it in business class. I told her that was not necessary for me. Usually I travel in economy class. I would have preferred a class cheaper than the economy, if there was one like that for ordinary or poor passengers. Then her husband called me "Uncle, we will buy business class ticket for you. You should travel in style," I was not going to do any business here. Moreover, I believed in the principle of simple living for bishops and others who live with the money of people including poor people.

I cannot think of luxury with the money of poor people. I insisted on the economy class. They arranged it. We could get from the computer. At the airport the first lady at the counter looked at my beard and asked what a bishop is. I could not believe an American

lady cannot understand the meaning of the word bishop. She called a senior lady and asked what a bishop is. I explained that I am a bishop or archbishop of the Assyrian Church in India. Is it a surname? They asked. I explained that is not a surname. It is a title. My travel Agent in India added that word next to my name thinking that I will get special respect by that title. Now I will ask my travel Agent not to add that title. It does not bring any respect to me, but only trouble.

I asked her "Don't you know what a bishop means?" She was either of a low standard intelligence or she was trying to be too smart. The lady marked something on my boarding pass. I thought it was for some special privilege. No it was not. The security man said your airline has marked special security check for you. I thought it was like special privilege for a bishop. No, the opposite was the meaning of the special security. They gave the choice for a rigorous touching on all parts of the body or powerful X-ray that showed whether I was hiding a blade or sharp nail cutter inside my underclothes. They got my tooth paste. They told it was larger than their specification. I could go back and pack it in my checked-in baggage or throw away. I said, "throw away".

In Dallas airport I was received by Maya as well as Joe Chackola, son of my Sunday school student Johny Chakola. He was in Mumbai parish. I had conducted the marriage of Joe Chackola in Trichur. Joe Chakola invited me to visit his apartment if I were not tired of the flight from Chicago. I said that I was okay. I knew that I would not get another gap in my already full itinerary. After visiting his apartment and having tea and meeting his wife and child they took me to Maya's house.

As soon as we reached Maya's house she took me to the school where her daughter Kristina was participating in a dance. Many parents were there. Maya tried to introduce her uncle to her close friends. When somebody told to the school teacher that I could play the Indian musical instrument called Sitar, she said that I should have played it on their stage. It was not easy to get a sitar to play. As it was difficult to carry it in the aeroplane, I do not attempt to play sitar in my travels abroad.

The next day Dencil Johnson Chammanam, my neighbour in Trichur came to see me. He is a tennis coach. He was a champion in the under 18 age group. His name appeared in the newspapers. Then he went to America on a tennis scholarship, first to learn and then to teach. I think he was about 18 when he came to America and now he is 42. He enjoys his job as coach in the high school. I was happy to see him.

Next day we went to the house of James and Sindhu Thottan. Sindhu has two children. Sindhu's mother- in-law, Sushila lives with her. Sushila's husband Raphael Thottan died in Dallas, Texas, when they came to visit them after his retirement. Sushila was known to me about 60 years ago. Her elder sister Katherine was of my age. My mother's house was next to them. So as children we used to meet to play during summer vacations.

The priest and his assistant of the Orthodox Church in America came to that home for supper. We talked about theological differences of Nestorius etc. I told the priest that I was a student of Fr. George Florovsky, the famous Russian Orthodox immigrant. The year I joined in Princeton he had retired from Harvard University and had begun his final stint in Princeton. He was very old. We were the only two priests who used to wear black cassock always. Even bishops and archbishops do not wear cassock always. They wear clerical suit with dog collar around the neck. When I first saw dog collar around the necks of the clergymen in England, I used to speculate about the origin of the name dog collar worn by the clergyman. Will the dogs protest against the use of dog collar by the clergy?

The senior priest told me that he was a convert from the Methodist Church or some Protestant Church. I know that many members of the Orthodox Church in America were converts from the Protestant Churches. I must admit the missionary spirit of the Orthodox Church members in attracting other Christians to their tradition. Later I read the news of the election of the Metropolitan of the Orthodox Church of America (OCA). The new Metropolitan is not one born in the Orthodox tradition. He was a Protestant; The Orthodox

Church has a Seminary, St. Vladimirs Seminary near New York. When I was a student in the Union Theological Seminary in New York in 1966 I visited it. Deacon T.G. Zachariah of the Orthodox Church was a student there. He used to attend the Indian Orthodox Church Qurbana on Sundays. He was secretary of the late Catholicos Moran Mor Geevarghese II. I used to know Dr.Alexander Schmemann, well known Russian Orthodox theologian. I explained to these priests about our Church in India and the latest position of the so called Nestorian Christology.

The following day we had dinner in the house of Mathew Chackola, son of Prof C. J. George. Joe Jo Chakola and family were there. With my niece Maya George and family we had a good Malayalee supper. The children played and made a lot of noise.

NEW YORK

On Tuesday October 21 Sanil and Maria took me to O'Hare airport to fly to New York. Morning was a little chilly. I knew that day was a long day for me.

When I reached New York there was nobody who knew me at the airport. Then I telephoned to Simon Thermadom. He was on his way. He took me to his brother John Thermadom for lunch.

After lunch and a nap I went to the house of Mrs.Surma Mooken. After tea and prayer we went to the Indian Restaurant which Surma's husband John and her cousin Samuel Pananchery own. They have employed Indian cooks who can cook *Masala Dosa* and such Malayalaee special food items which have been favourite in North India and abroad. There were Americans eating at this Indian Restaurant.

Fr. Dr. Raju Varghese, the priest of the Indian Orthodox Church in that area came to meet me at the Restaurant. I had met him when he was a student in the Seminary in Kottayam. Now he has taken Ph.D. and also is teaching part time in the St. Vladimir Russian Orthodox Theological Seminary near New York where Indian Orthodox Church clergy also do their studies. There are many Indian priests from the sister Churches serving or studying in USA, but I

do not get time to meet them.

I telephoned to Geevarghese Emmatty. But there was no time to go to New Jersey where I usually stay whenever I visit New York area. There was Davis Vengassary who wanted to meet me to bless the foundation stone of the house he was building for him. I told him that I had only a few minutes left before rushing to the Kennedy Airport.

I was sorry to miss the Holy Qurbana in Yonkers and Qasha Sulaiman, Mr. Ivan Mirza and other good Assyrian friends. There was no Sunday available for me to celebrate Holy Qurbana in the Mar Mari Sleeha Church in Yonkers. I promised them that I will do Holy Qurbana during next trip in Yonkers, Detroit and Toronto which I missed in this trip.

New York City is known to me as I was a student in Union Theological Seminary in the 120th street on the Broadway when I had the privilege to attend the famous lecture of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in the Riverside church next to the Union Seminary in 1967.

Simon's eldest brother John Thermadom whom we call Valsan came to see me and take me to the JF Kennedy international airport. We took some photos inside the restaurant. Then we went to the car park area and shoot a few more pictures. The wind was chilly and it was about 8 p.m. We decided to rush to the airport. When John dropped me at the airport I said that I will manage on my own. But he said, "No, you please wait inside the airport and I will come after parking the car and I will help you to get the boarding pass."

Chapter 5

Dubai Again

I had to go to Dubai in order to purchase the ticket of Kurdistan Airlines. So one of the two trustees of my parish in UAE, John Paul bought the ticket in Dubai. I think it was something like 600 US dollars. I got a scanned copy of the ticket by e mail to show to the immigration in New York to allow me to travel from New York to Dubai. As I did not have a visa to Dubai, the immigration authorities in New York ought to be convinced that I had visa and ticket to exit out of Dubai. Visa to Iraq I had, but the ticket to Kurdistan should be within three days of arrival in Dubai. Actually my ticket was on the third day. But the date written in the ticket was by hand and not legible. It was not a ticket printed on a computer.

The man who checked my ticket asked his superior officer about the action to be taken in this matter; He said that there are two other passengers traveling in the same flight with similar problem. He was kind enough to count me a third one with similar problems. Then I knew I will have company when I reach Dubai airport, if they begin to question my genuineness.

When I reached Dubai airport it was a new terminal, a very good one. But my people were waiting for me at the regular terminal where they had seen me off in September. I was sure that the parish trustee John Paul and others will be there to receive me at the airport. But nobody was seen upon my arrival. Actually I had to arrange the short visa, Fortunately, Mr. Moffat, the brother-in-law of Thimothy Mooken was waiting for me. He told me that he was waiting there for more than half an hour and nobody from our Church was there.

As I was very tired he took me to the house of Thimothy Mooken. I began to think why nobody had come to meet me. As I could not think of any reason I told Thimothy Mooken that we should find out whether anything unexpected had happened. When we telephoned our people they said that they were still waiting in the airport for my arrival. When I told that I had already arrived they began to think

that there is a brand new terminal and almost all Emirates flights had started using the new terminal. I felt sorry for them. There was nothing I could help.

Next morning, on Thursday I shifted to the house of Paul Chakola. We telephoned to some members and reminded about the Holy Qurbana on Friday morning in our regular rented St.Philip Chapel in St. Martin Anglican Church in al Yarmook, Sharjah. I was doing Holy Qurbana in that chapel for the first time. I was happy that I was able to make it.

Some people had not known that I was coming for Holy Qurbana. There was a proposal to go to Kurdistan via Vienna when I return from New York. But since my ticket to New York was via Dubai, my return in the same route is cheaper. With a ticket from Dubai to Kurdistan and back I could continue my return journey from Dubai to Cochin. If we look for shorter route it could be expensive. We have to travel more time in the air in the same airline in order to be cheaper.

One more problem was that the ticket to Kurdistan from Dubai is sold only in Dubai or Kurdistan. I could not purchase it from India or in America. My Travel Agent in India told me that it would cost much if he had to book to Kurdistan. I will have to go to Istanbul in Turkey and then to fly to Kurdistan. The cost of Dubai to Erbil in Kurdistan was only about $600. But if I had booked via Istanbul it would have cost me about $1700.

After holy Qurbana I met Sebi Kalathotukaren who is a young man from our Church in Palghat working in Khaleej Times in Dubai. He suggested that I should be interviewed by media. I told them that there is no much time left. I had to leave for Kurdistan next morning. Sebi arranged Mr.Elvis Chummar, Reporter of Malayala Manorama, India's No.1 Language News Paper, came to interview me in the residence of Paul Chakola where I was staying. He had seen me when he was working in Trichur.

Although Malayala Manorama is from Kottayam, this newspaper has a Trichur edition and big office in Trichur. The junction near our Metropolitan's Palace in Trichur is named as Manorama Junction. Elvis Chummar has just shifted his job to another news agency.

He came with TV cameraman and asked questions about our Church, about my visit to Kurdistan in Iraq. Like all investigative reporters he asked me what the important issues to be discussed in the Holy Synod were and what side I will vote when some issues are discussed. Some voice inside me began to tell me, "Do not talk too much".

On Friday morning I was able to contact my Assyrian friend Mr.Zaia Marcus. He promised to come to meet me in the evening. I talked with Ward Zaia, another good Assyrian friend whom I had visited while he was in hospital. There was no time to arrange a meeting with the Assyrians in such a short notice. Still Advocate Carmen, Zaia Marcus and Ward Zaia and their families came near the house of Paul Chakola and had supper in a restaurant. I was interested in talking with the Assyrians rather than eating with them.

This supper meeting was very useful. Because I did not have the telephone number of Mar Gewargis Slewa Metropolitan of Baghdad. Advocate Carmen telephoned to Baghdad and gave me an opportunity to talk to Mar Gewargis Metropolitan about the exact time of my arrival the next day. I had sent an e mail which had not reached the destination. I requested the co-operation of the Assyrians in UAE to join with the people of Trichur in attending Holy Qurbana at least occasionally. In Malayalam Holy Qurbana we use the words like Barekhmar, Halleluiah, Amen. If we have more members from the Assyrians and Indians we can conduct on alternate Fridays in Assyrian and Malayalam language.

Next morning Jack Mannukaden, an engineer working in Saudi Arabia, came to take me to the airport to go to Kurdistan. Jack is perhaps the tallest man in our Church in India. His father M.L.Paul Master too was tall. But Jack is taller. M.L. Paul Master was my teacher in the Chaldean Syrian High School. Jack's elder brother is the Corporate Manager of the Chaldean Syrian Church Schools. Jack's wife Sophie's mother Sosamma is the cousin of Varghese, father of Paul Chakola, where I was staying. Jack asked Paul also to come to the airport. I said that there is no need, because visitors are not allowed inside the airport. Before terrorism began to trouble

all visitors could come inside the airports. As a matter of fact I do not want more than one person to drop me or to meet me at the airport.

I could not find the place where the Kurdistan Airlines is mentioned in the Dubai Airport. Finally I found an area with name board of Kurdistan Airways. One young Assyrian came and kissed my hand and asked "Are you not going to the Holy Synod?" I was happy to meet some body who knows me. He was traveling from Australia to Duhok to be engaged to an Assyrian girl. He introduced his mother, So I felt company in that unfamiliar place. I was going to Kurdistan for the first time.

In December I met him in Australia. I asked him whether his marriage was over. He said that only engagement was over and marriage would be later. May be visa complications cause delay in marriages of many people.

The following news is a warning. We should learn to keep our streets clean. Singapore is very strict about it. Indians should learn from them.

Not worth a spit? Dubai targets popular Asian chew

Mar. 26, 2009 12:43 PM, Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates - Be warned: Spitting here could get you deported.

We're not talking just any kind of spit. In this case, it's the red-tinted juice of a popular Asian leaf that's causing the fuss as Dubai tries to buff the image of its less-posh districts.

The crackdown - announced this week amid a broader effort to stem behavior deemed offensive - has stirred an unusual Arab-Asian culture clash in a city where the friction is often between Western ways grating against conservative Gulf sensibilities.

The tradition of chewing the leaves of the betel plant, a mild stimulant common from Pakistan to Southeast Asia, is so ingrained in some countries that it's been mentioned in works as varied as

Hindu's sacred Vedas and the musical "South Pacific." Even Myanmar's authoritative regime has failed in efforts to curb its use.

"It's like telling an Italian not to have an espresso," said Pakistani security guard Munir Ahmed.

The assault on the betel leaf could be seen as a curious choice as Dubai's faces far more serious troubles after the global recession crashed the boomtown's party and left many construction sites idle and foreign workers packing up.

But the slowdown has allowed Dubai officials to play catch up when it comes to imposing their sense of order - on issues big and small - in a place that was stuck for years on fast-forward.

Dubai's cosmopolitan tolerance is still strides ahead of any place in the region. Yet it's clear that the book of rules is getting heftier.

Earlier this month, Dubai's municipal authorities issued what amounted to a chaperone-style list of boundaries, like no serious kissing or hugging in public, no miniskirts and bikinis, and keeping a lid on public boozing and rude gestures. Most of the bans were already in place, but the message was that harsher fines - or even jail time - might be imposed.

It's seen as part of cultural push and pull of Dubai. At the moment, it's the outsiders who are feeling some pressure from the Emirates even though the locals are outnumbered about 8-to-1.

The director general of the Dubai municipality, Hussain Nasser Lootah, announced Monday a clean streets campaign that specifically targeted the use and sale of betel - a fast-growing vine whose leaves are widely chewed with tobacco, cloves or with the hard areca nut. The popular mixture is known as "paan," from the word pan in Urdu, and promotes a reddish saliva.

In some areas older Dubai - far from the tourist glitz and walled beach resorts - sidewalks and walls are stained with the red-colored

spit of betel users. While it interferes little with day-to-day life, its not in keeping with the vision of Dubai as a modern, efficient city.

"We are taking all measures to stop its sale here," said Lootah. "Deportation is a crucial step."

Such threats, however, collide with the traditions of the South Asian workers and shopkeepers who were the backbone of Dubai well before its transformation from sleepy Gulf port to millionaire magnet. In teeming South Asian neighborhoods, betel leaves are sold in grocery stores, street stalls and cafeterias.

"We were working and helping build Dubai before the rest of the world heard of the place," said Rizwan Karem, an Indian exporter in the old commercial district of Deira. "This is a harmless little bit of home we enjoy here." Rohit Mukherjee, a supermarket supplies salesman who has been living in Dubai for 14 years, wonders if the proposed punishment matches the offense. "I know that the red stains on the pavement look ugly," he said. "But deporting somebody is too much."

Chapter 6

Duhok

This was my sixth trip to Iraq. When I came for the first time in 1962, I came by train from Syria in the border of Turkey. The railway does not exist now. My second visit was in September 1968. At that time I flew from New York to Baghdad,via.Copenhagen. In my third visit to Iraq in June 1977 I flew from Munich to Baghdad without a visa. In 1984 and 1990 Bishop Mar Poulose and I flew from Bombay direct to Baghdad. My destination in Iraq was mainly Baghdad, although I visited Mosul, Habbania, Basra etc,

For more than 18 years I was not courageous enough to visit Iraq, the land of our forefathers in faith. All what happened in those 18 years between Kuwait attack in August 1990 and 2008 are painful to record here. Most of the readers of this small book will have some knowledge of those terrible events. We can all pray that let no one suffer like them.

Many friends warned me against a trip to Iraq whether north or south. I explained to them that some of my friends say that the Kurdistan area where I was planning to visit is now known as North Iraq or American Iraq, which is considered safe even in troubled country.

Mar Gewargis Sliwa, Metropolitan of Iraq and Russia living in Baghdad, was waiting for me at the Erbil international airport. I walked like a VIP. Nobody checked my bag. I was greeted by the Metropolitan who took me to Ankawa, 2 or 3 miles from Erbil. I rested for half an hour at the priest's quarters and took lunch.

The drive from Ankawa to Duhok was about 3 hours. We made in time for the supper. The Catholicos Patriarch His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV was waiting for me along with other prelates who arrived with the Patriarch a few hours before we did. I had visited MarAprem Khamis a few weeks earlier in his place in Phoenix, Arizona. But other bishops I was meeting after two years or more.

We all were lodged in the Bishop's House which is the residence of Bishop Mar Isaac, Bishop of Nuhadra and Russia. It is a huge House. It was the office of the Intelligence of President Saddam Hussain. We had good rooms with TV and such modern amenities. There was Treadmill and other machines for physical exercise. I saw most bishops were making use of these exercise machines. I too spent some minutes on these exercise machines.

At the beginning of 1953 the first church was consecrated in Duhok by His Grace Mar Youseph Khnaneesho Metropolitan, (died in July 1977) and His Grace Mar Esho Sargis, (died in December 1966 with the priests, deacons and a large number of the members of the Church of the East, and the second one was consecrated by His Grace Mar Youseph Khananeesho and Mar Youkhanan Philipos at Kirkuk also in our own land.

On 30 October Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV visited Babillo to meet Malik Paul Khoshaba. It became a topic of talk among some Assyrians in and out of Iraq. The following are some of the remarks found on the Internet.

It would seem the AUA (Assyrian Universal Alliance) is now taking us back a century in terms of how our societies are structured. As reported in Ankawa.com the AUA delegation visiting Malik Paul the grand son of Malik Khoshaba in the village of BABILLO, is of no consequence to anyone.

The role of 'Malik' was perhaps necessary a century ago when we lived in Tyareh in Hakkari. We are now in the 21st century and have learned to make our own decisions in a much more complex world. In many ways our sophistication far exceeds the remnants of any one 'Malik'.

Mr. Paul is symbolically referred to as 'Malik' and as recently reported in Ankawa when Mar Dinkha and his escorts visited Mr. Paul calling him the Malik of "The Greater Tyareh". Traditionally, any Malik would reside in his own village and not in the village of his in-laws. The village of Babillo is strictly that of his in-laws which Baznayeh are. Nahla region is where most Tyarayeh live. However, if we toss traditions aside, everyone is free to live where they want.

My own lineage is from the Greater Tyareh, both parents and can trace up to six grand parents but I no longer want any one Malik to represent me. That sun has gone down and I hope forever.

While I am proud of my lineage but my loyalty is to every single Assyrians of Bni-Umti. My fate is intertwined and is the same like everyone else's.

Twice I have voted to choose my own representatives and I offer a humble message to the AUA and all the Maliks to respect and honor the emergence of new era and leave behind what is old and buried. www.ankawa. com/forum/index.php/topic, 237918.0. html

Paul is Giwargis Hurmiz Sada'a brother in law and they do not speak to each other for years. Both are ex-baathees as far as reality dictates.

AUA will do anything nowadays to drum up any kind of support as they are desperate to maintain their presence in the political arena of our nation

About 120 years ago we had 14 bishops in the Middle East. I give the list of the prelates given by the Archbishop of Canterbury's Mission to the Assyrian Christians, London, S.P.C.K., 1891, page 30. The only one outside the Middle East was an Indian prelate named Mar Audeesho Thondanat, consecrated at the Mar Shallitha Cathedral in Kochanes and died in Trichur in November 1900 after a long period of 38 years with persecution from the Roman Catholics in India. Including this Indian Metropolitan let me count the total number as 15. I do not know more than 15 prelates any time since the time the Pope of Rome consecrated John Sulaqa in 1553 A.D. I do hope that in the near future we will reach the number 15 again. I quote below from p.30 of the above mentioned booklet.

.PRESENT ASSYRIAN EPISCOPATE

The following is a list of the Assyrian Bishops:-

1 *The Patriarch, Mar (Ruel) Shimoon, Catholicos of the East, resides at Kochanes.*

2 *Mar Isaac (Khananishu), Mattran or Metropolitan of the East, resides at Shamsdin*

3 *Mar Johannan of Shamsdin*

4 *Mar Sor-Ishu of Gavar*

5 *Mar Sergis of Jeelu*

6 *Mar Ishu of Duri* *Near Amadia*

7 *Mar Johnan of Okri* *" "*

8 *Mar Shimoon* *of Artel*

9 *Mar Tuma* *" "*

10 *Mar Auraham, Patriarch-designate, first cousin to the Patriarch. He lives at Kochanes.*

All the above are in Turkish Kurdistan. On the Persian side of the frontier there are in the plain of Urmi:-

11 *Mar Goriel of Urmi*

12 *Mar Johnan of Superghan*

13 *Mar Johannan of Gavilan, now in England and insane.*

Besides these prelates, I believe Mar Sleeva of Gavar is still alive in Russia, whether he fled from persecution.

While I was in Duhok Fr.Yatroon Yonan came to me and gave me two issues of a well printed magazine named **Diana,** Vol. 9 July and Vol.10, August 2008. The front cover pages state that it is the magazine of a Quarterly Cultural magazine issued by Cultural Group of Diana. There are a lot of colour photographs. It is mainly Arabic and some Assyrian. Since I do not know enough Arabic to understand the contents of these publications I carried them with me. At least I

saw an article on 7 August 1933. It is the massacre of the Assyrians at Semele in North Iraq after the British mandate was given up.

I am interested in written notes or papers in foreign land. Because the information I gather from my friends and well wishers is not accurate. Both sides do not know the language of communication correctly.

Another magazine Called Mawtwa Journal or *Mawtwa Ammaya* in Assyrian was also given to me by some. (e mail address is mawtwaammaya@yahoo.com). The word *Mawtwa* means a Committee.

The following is the first page of the magazine as a sample for my readers to know something:-

Literature of Lamentation in **Ancient Mesopotamia In Light of Cuneiform references**

An M.A. Thesis by: Hikmat B. Al-Aswad

Translated by: Aziz Emmanuel Zebari

Specialized researchers refer to the antiquity of the ancient Iraqi literary works that represent the first attempts at creative literary work in man's history, and they also confirm the oral circulation of that literature at periods before the writing down of history.

(1) A large number of inscriptions on tablets in both Sumerian and Akkadian have come down to us. They represent a rich heritage that is characterized by originality and diversity. However, and despite the abundance of cuneiform texts that were discovered at the archaeological sites in Iraq that run into more than half a million, only a small percentage of these are related to literary work. Some experts estimate their number at some five thousand tablets, or a little more than that.

(2) During their cultural process of development and maturation, these literary texts or literary pieces used to move from one city to another, from one age to another and from one people to another.

(3) They have also reflected many religious beliefs, social norms and traditions of those people.

(4) The greatest part of the literary work in Mesopotamian civilization has come into existence in the form of national legacy achieved by many generations of poets, chanters and storytellers.

(5) The starting point in the literary legacy began and flourished from the ancient Sumerian literature whereby the Sumerians developed various and rich arts poetica, and at the same time the Akkadian literature came into being and developed to reach its peak during the ancient Babylonian period.

(6) The most creative and it was at the same time that the Akkadian literature emerged, developed and flourished during the ancient Babylonian period.

(7) For we find the most creative styles as well as the most lofty literary works with the Babylonians and Assyrians. A precious treasure of Assyrian literature has come down to us through the library of Assur Banipal that contained an important and big group of ancient literary texts whether Sumerian or Akkadian. ……..

This is a lengthy article. Eight pages are printed in this issue to be continued in the next issue or issues. I must admit that the printing on glossy paper is of a high quality. The contents of the magazine are that of a historical and secular nature

Duhok .

Duhok governorate lies in the far north-west of Iraq and forms the western governorate in Iraqi Kurdistan Region. It has a strategic location since it is considered to be a point of joint among three parts of Kurdistan 'Syria- Turkey- Iraq'.

The governorate lies in the portable area, which means between the wavy area and high mountainous area, the general shape of the governorate is an irregular rectangle and the longitude line almost divides it in 34 degree to the east into two halves and passes in the center of the governorate. It lies between the two lines of latitude

36. 40 and 37. 20 degree to the north, so it situates to the north of Equator in the northern Equinoctial area.

Duhok governorate is considered to be one of the most significant and important governorates especially in historical and geographical sides. The remains and carves found in its hills and caves show its significance in addition to its special geographical location which situates on the boundary of two states, besides there is a strategic international road passing across Duhok city which connects Iraq, Kurdistan with Turkey and the external wide world, and also there is a passing petrol tube which passes from Kirkuk to Turkey in its northern-western angle.

It is known by its various topography consisting of very high, rough and complex mountains which form the political border with the republic of Turkey beside the extended plains enriched with agricultural resources which form the southern area of the governorate; its area is about 1075. And because of non-existence of accurate records at the present time the Directorate of Counting and Registration depended on the old records and added the reliable rate of increase in the population to them. The governorate is divided managerially into the following territories:

1- Duhok territory

2- Semeal territory

3- Zakho territory

4- Amedeye territory

5- Sheikhan territory

6- Akri territory

Duhok Territory

The center is Duhok city which is the center of the governorate at the same time. It lies in an extended and wide valley. To the north of the city there is the White mountain, and to the south, there is the great Dahkan Shindokha mountain. Two small rivers flow in the city. The first is called Duhok river which gushes from the north near Khaziava village and flows to the south, an irrigation dam was built on it in Duhok narrow passage Geli Duhok in 1990. The second tributary is smaller than the first one called Hishkarow River which gushes from the north- eastern near Barebuhar village and flows to the south-western, both rivers meet in the south- west of the city. The water of both rivers is used for watering the fruit farms spread on their banks.

Duhok city joined to Badinan Emirate in the reign of Sultan Hassan Beck Bin AL- Emir Saifadeen who died in 940 H., its castle witnessed murdering one of the princes of Badinan Emirate Qubad Beak Bin Sultan Hussein Wali who ruled from 981 H. to 989 H., Duhok city remained under the control of the Emirate until its collapse in 1842 A.D. then it was joined to Mosul Brigade and after that Duhok territory was formed in 1290 H.(1873 A.D). When Mosul Brigade was collapsed by British armies and after the First World War, the management of Duhok territory was given to an Iraqi official called Ahmed Azawi. He was the chief of the police in the territory and became the assistant of the political ruler. Then Sir Line was appointed as the political ruler of Duhok territory until the foundation of Iraqi government, so Fatah Beck was appointed to be the Mayor of the territory and started in 1st of April, 1922. On 27th of May, 1969 Duhok governorate was formed and the city became the center of the governorate.

Duhok city is famous for having many fruit fields and celebrated grapes But in the recent years and according to Baath policy seeking to deprive the Kurdish citizen from his land, the government registered the lands and fields in the name of Duhok Municipality and changed them into residential areas. So nothing left except the fields on the banks of both rivers which give a lot of resources and income to the citizens who depend on agriculture to earn their living.

The city is extended constructively from its southern, western and eastern sides after the emigration processes from villages and country-sides by AL- Ba'ath regime, therefore a lot of them refuged inside the city and made its parts public residential quarters and after the public uprising the commercial movement was flourished and it became an important trade center in Kurdistan Region. The city is surrounded by mountains from three directions, the White Mountain in the north, Shindokha Mountain in the south and Mamseen Mountain in the east while in the western direction; the city is opened to Sumeal agricultural plain.

There are many ancient places in the city and its sides which transfer the life and culture of our grand- fathers. We can say it is a sort of museum contains a lot of locations, statues and carved pictures in its caves in addition to the remained ancient tombs spread in its lands to the present time which tell the story of the generations and periods the city passed by for instance:

1-Duhok Castle

The castle was in the location which is occupied now by Post and Communications Office. It was mentioned in the reign of Sultan Hassan Beck when Duhok city joined Badinan Emirate and also happened that one of the princes was killed in the castle, last one who mentioned it was the French traveller Nedea who passed the city in 1897 A.D. and described it as an ancient castle deserted by the prince and started to build a new castle and still there is a wall of the castle overlooking the river seen by every body.

2-Chewar Stoon Settlement Cave

The settlement lies in the eastern side from Duhok narrow passage Geli Duhok. The most important evidence which assures that it was an ancient settlement is the existence of the wall in the western side of it, also the existence of earthenware and stony bases for residential buildings and tombs. It is certain that the settlement passed several ancient civilization periods and the joint relationship between the temple and the settlement is the existence of five torches Hawen spread on the road which leads to the main temple through a tunnel

Its length is about 11m, its width is about 4m and its height is about 3m.

3-Malathaya Hill (Malta Hill)

It is a great archaeological hill and it lies in the west of Duhok city in about 7KM and on the main road which connects Duhok city to Mosul and Zakho, the Assyrian earthenware is spread on its surface, it is thought that it was Malitay the Assyrian city which means the entrance or the path. It is also believed that it was a military castle of great and strategic importance in the Assyrian reign.

4-Halamata Cave

It lies on the foot of Shindokha mountian in front of Gavarik village to the south west of Duhok city. These remains consist of four carved images in the form of similar scenes, each image contains a procession of seven gods riding on sacred animals and the king stands in front of it and another person behind him. These gods represent Ashur, Anilil, Seen, Sun, Ishtar and Adid and possibly it represents a remembrance of a military triumph.

On 26th of October, 1991 the Interior Ministry of Iraqi regime issued a law numbered 594 to pull out the officials and establishments from the governorate but no one carried that order out and the offices continued in their work and to give services to the citizens under the supervision of Kurdistan Forehead until the selection of the parliament on 19th of May, 1992 and the formation of Kurdistan Region Government on 4th of July, 1992. Then a new governor was appointed for the governorate. He started his duties on 10th of September, 1992.

Duhok city is the center of the governorate and the territory. The territory area is about 107 sq. km. It contains 7 villages and they are Upper Malta, Lower Malta, Gavarik, Shindokha, Shakheki, Baroshki and Nizarki and these villages became quarters of the city.

Duhok territory consists of two districts and they are Zawita district and Doski district.

1-Zawita District

Its center is the Lower Zawita which is far from the territory about 16 KM and its area is about 420 sq km. It contains 59 villages. All of them were destroyed before and during Anfal operations except the center of the district and the two enforced collective towns Kori Gavana and Bakira. The center of the district situates on the main road which joins the center of district to Amedeye territory.

Zawita town is considered as one of the beautiful resorts in Duhok governorate. The highest degree of temperature in Zawita is (36) C in summer. It is wellknown for elms forests in which there are extended areas of shade. Therefore King Feysal the Second chose a spot among these forests and constructed a house for resting and touring. The people of Duhok city make this area as their recreational ground or park all the seasons of the year.

The name Zawita in Kurdish language is given to places where snow falls heavily in the winter season meaning that it is close to the word fridge - 'cool box'. The district is famous for dense forests and excellent pasture lands for breeding the cattle.

The citizens of the district depend on winter agriculture to earn their living such as wheat, barley, lentils, chick- peas and others by exploiting the plain areas such as Maman plain and Badi knoll. They also take care of growing the fields of grapes, peaches and sumacs in addition to summer agriculture such as rice, tomatoes, tobacco, peas, beans and vegetables, and growing fruitful trees like peaches, apricots, walnuts and Tayfi grapes in which villages such as Bari Buhar, Khaziava, Binarink, Emink and others are well- known in growing such fruitful trees getting benefit from the water of springs which are spread on their parts in addition to the water of the following small rivers:

1-Zawita- Kora- Rashanki- Benarink- Bedeel- Gomill.

2-Bagera- Kora- Rashanki- Benarink- Bedeel- Gomill.

3-Kizoo- Peda- Bedeel- Gomill.

4-Khaziava- linava- Garmava- Duhok Dam- Duhok- Tigris.

5-Beri Buhar- Beseri- Nazarki- Duhok- Tigris.

The most important mountain in the district is Kamaka mountain which forms the nothern and western border for the district and (Bessi, Sepi-reze, Mamseen, Zawita mountains, Kantara, Zorwa) other heights which form the majority of the area of the district distinguished by roughness and complexity.

There are many archaeological places in the district like caves, hills and remains. Duhok Archaeology Office recorded 24 archaeological locations. The most important ones are: Badi archaeological palace, destroyed during Anfal operations, Mamyan castle on Kamaka mountain, Beseri caves, Eteet, Koradeer, Piromara mountain, Bakhornif mountain, (Rash) the black cave in Kizoo and other places.

There are many suitable places to be resorts in the district. The visitors will come regularly to them in summer days for rest and tourism if the hands of reform and remonstration reached them such as Birgeen, Bablow, Kizoo, Merdeenk, Stokorik and other villages.

After the uprising and the formation of the Kurdistan Region Government, the hands of building and reconstruction reached the district and the majority of its villages were reconstructed in addition to water projects and buildings (schools, health centers, and mosques).

2- Doski District

The center is Mangish town and far from territory center is about 30 KM. Its area is about 454 sq km and contains 63 villages all of them were destroyed except the district center and Hogava village. The district joins the governorate center by a paved road branches from the north of Zawita narrow passage to the north- western passing in the middle of Doski area.

The word Mangish has several meanings such as:

It is said that one of the disciples called, St.Thomas had passed this area when he travelled to India and Thomas was the one who touched the Christ to believe in his resurrection. The process is called Man-Kash in Assyrian language, therefore the area is named according to this process. The second opinion says that it came from the word (Mikosh) which means Magi and the evidence to prove that is the places of worshiping the God according to Zaradishta religius principles in them and after the spreading of Christian religion among the people of the area, the temple was changed into a church.

The district is well- known for having excellent pasture lands and dense forests. The citizens depend on winter season agriculture such as wheat, barley, lentils and chick- peas, getting benefit from the flat and plain lands and knolls like Deragizhnik plain and Telakorow knoll and other flat and even lands spread in all parts of the district beside the farms of seasonal grapes and fruitful trees like nuts, figs, pears, sumacs and fruit fields like such as peaches, apricots, apples and quinces. They also practise summer season agriculture like, tomatoes, rice, peas, beans, tobacco, onions, garlic and others getting benefit from the water of springs spread in villages and valleys beside the following small rivers:

1-Derk- Shamrakh- Sadi- Shawrik- Navdara- Chiran- Ashank- Khabur.

2-Mangish- Dulia- Kanisark- Geli Karam- Navdara- Chiran- Ashank- Khabur.

In addition to Khabur river which forms the northern- western border of the district, it is benefited from its eastern bank in a dense way for agriculture and also from the water and the bank of western Sepna tributary which forms the northern border of the district. The citizens take care of breeding the cattle and the poultry.

The most important mountain in the district is the series of Kamaka mountain which extends from the east to the west till it meets with the White mountain Birgeen village which is erected to the south of the district in addition to the Kovili heights, Beroski and Zewka- Abu.

Remains, hills, castles and archaeological cities are found in the district Duhok Archaeology Office recorded 36 archaeological location such as Adid Nirari statue in Dergla sheikha, Geripete, Deragizhnik remains, Besefike, Derk, Babukheke, Gelnaseke and others besides the precious scripts in Mangish church. Their reign belonged to 1574.

There are many suitable places to be beautiful resorts like Gelnaseke, Dukhorik, Besheenk and others.

After the sacred uprising and the formation of Kurdistan Region Government, the governmental offices with NGOs became proactive to reconstruct the majority of villages belonging to the district and to build schools, health centers and mosques in addition to the water projects in the district.

Semeal Territory

Semeal town lies to the west of governorate center in the middle of fertile and plain lands. It is far from Duhok city in about 16 km and situates on the international road which leads to Zakho.

It is said that its name consists of two syllables. 'Se' means three in Kurdish language and 'Mal' means house. Together it means 'the three houses'. There is another opinion says its name comes from 'Se' means three and 'Mil' means mound so together it becomes 'the three mounds'. By all means it is an ancient town and what proves that is the great hill which centralizes the town. On the hill, there was the palace of Azedeans Nobleman; he was Namir Agha Denani. In August, 1933 the Iraqi army massacred many Assyrians.

Its lands are distinguished by the fertility of their soil and considered to be the main source of producing cereal in the governorate specially winter season crops like wheat, barley, lentils, chick- peas and beans in addition to summer season crops like tomatoes, rice, vegetables, sun- seed flowers, melons and water melons beside the fruit fields such as peaches, apples, pears, pomegranates and others getting benefit from irrigation wells spread all over the parts of the area. Also they get benefit from the water of

Duhok river passes from the west of the territory and flows to Mosul dam lake.

Some of the citizens work in breeding the cattle which are considered the basic source of their living, on the other hand, many citizens work in commerce getting benefit from the international road which passes by the territory. Since the territory lands are plain, the mountains form its northern border and divides it from the mountaneous areas. The Dulob heights extend to the south from the territory. Duhok Archaeology Office recorded 34 archaeological locations. They are: 1-Semeal hill 2-Busarya 3-Kashafir 4-Mam Shivan and others.

The territory area is about 306 sq.km and contains 30 villages in addition to two districts, they are: 1-Faida district 2-Selevani district

Faidi District

The center is Faida town, which lies to the south of the governorate center and on the western edge of the little Dahkan mountain and on a paved road leads to Mosul. At the present time, it is under the control of Iraqi regime authority. Its area is about 281 sqkm and contains 32 villages all of them were destroyed before and during AI- Anfal operations of bad reputation. The majority of the citizens of the Zetik plain villages which lies to the north west of the district center were gathered in Shariya collective town. The rest were displaced and emigrated to the villages by force excusing that they were too close to Faida military camp.

In the district, there are some villages which were inhabited by our brothers, the Arab. They lie to the eastern bank of river Tigris. The lands of the district are famous for growing winter season crops like wheat, barley, chick- peas, lentils, beans and others exploitirg Zetik plain and Semeal (Duban) plain beside summer season crops such as tomatoes, rice, onions, sun seed flowers and fruit fields like peaches, pears, apricots, pomegranates and apples getting benefit from the water of irrigation wells and from the water of springs spread all over the parts of the district. The most important

mountains in the district are the great Dahkan and the little Dahkan. A lot of people from Azedeans Ethnic live with the Muslims in the district; also there are some Christians in the area. Duhok Archaeology Office recorded 34 archaeological locations. They are: Badriya castle, Dostaka caves, the monastery of Mar Daniel and others.

Selevani District

Its center was Assihe town and belonged to Zakho territory but it was destroyed in the year 1975 and the Kurdish citizens were displaced by force according to regulation of the council of Iraqi revolution leadership numbered 8591 on 10th of August, 1975 and had been settled in residential collective towns in the governorate except the territory center excusing that it lies on the international road. Then another regulation was issued by the above mentioned council numbered 648 on 20th of May, 1979 including other parts from the district to be displaced and inhabited by the Arabic families who were safe in the area. Great sums of money were devoted to build the collective towns for the Arabic families and to destroy all the villages belong to the district. The following residential collective towns were built in Selevani plain to inhabit the Arabic.

1- Sarshow collective town 250 houses

2- Moquble collective town 200 houses

3- Bawarde collective town 200 houses

4- Batell callective town 350 houses

5- Avzerik collective town 200 houses

6- Khirabdem collective town 200 houses

7- Keliki collective town 167 houses

8- Basitke collective town 200 houses

9- Kirsheen collective town 200 houses

10- Bajid Kandal collective town 100 houses

Peshekhaber and Derabeen collective towns were abolished in excusing of security circumstances and the houses were neglected in them. The total of Arabic families settled in the district reached 2106 families, this was not enough, but another regulation was issued numbered 3162 on 10th of July, 1985 deciding to deliver agricultural lands to Arabic families in the area. The center of the district was changed to Batel enforced collective town in 1979 which lies on the international road Duhok- Zakho and was joined to Semeal territory.

The district lands are fertile, plain and suitable for agriculture especially the famous plain of Selevani which extends from Duban plain to peshe Khabur on Tigris River. Most of the people depend on winter agriculture like wheat, barley and others in addition to summer agriculture like tomatoes, and others with breeding the cattle. The district is considered to be the main source of producing wheat and barley in the governorate and its lands are within the line of guaranteed rains. Besides they get benefit from the water of springs and wells spread all over the district for summer agriculture. The most important mountains in the district are the White and Bekher which form the northern border for the district with Rezgari district.

Many archaeological locations are found in the district. Duhok Archaeology Office recorded 34 locations spread on the southern feet of white and Bekher mountains and they are: Kewash castle, Assihe palace and Zaafaran city beside the locations in the plains like Basiteke remains and others.

Its area is about 811 sq.m and contains 83 villages. All of them were destroyed in 1976 and the Kurdish citizens were displaced from the area in three stages 1975, 1977and 1979. Its identity was changed into Arabic, as we mentioned before, and the Arabic families were inhabited in collective towns built specially for them.

Zakho Territory

It is one of the important territories in the region and considered to be the gate of the region to the external world. Zakho city is the center of the territory which lies on the south- western side of the famous plain of Sendi with fertile soil. Zakho is a beautiful city

characterized by a lot of water and nice climate, lies on Khabur river which passes by and a branch from the river divides the city into two parts and there is a stony bridge on it, which was built during the reign of Badinan Emirate, then the branch meets with the main branch which passes by an ancient castle. In the castle, there are a bunch of eight angles, columns above them sharp curves and decorations. They made the castle as house for their princess.

The city was also considered to be the main source of making and exporting the folklore clothes Shall and Shapik, but it started to shrink because of the shortage in the materials used for making the clothes and men shifted to wear clothes made of different types of cloth. The city is regarded as the gate of the region to the external world. Therefore it becomes an important commercial center and the majority of Zakho people work in trade and there are many trade companies in the city. Zakho city is full of historical remains, Duhok Archaeology Office listed 15 archaeological locations and they are:

1-Dalal Bridge

This bridge is erected over Khabur River to the east of the city. There are different stories or opinions concerning its construction, Hamarteen says it is Roman, Asskeef says it is Greek and one of the leaders of the great Alexandar AL- Makadoni his name was Slowkas ordered to erect the bridge and some of the archaeologists in the Iraqi General Directorate of Archaeology think it might be erected by one of the Badinan Sultans. But it is certain that the new bridge is erected on the remains of the ancient one.

2- Zakho Castle

It lies in the city center on the western of Khabur river and it is still in sight. It was the governing house in the reign of Badinan Emirate The prince Ali Khan 1205- 1212 H renovated and extended the castle.

3- Qubad Pasha Castle

This castle is situated in the cemetery of Zakho. It has a hexagon shape, six windows and a gate as an enterance. Earthenware and

lime were used in building and plastering the castle with writings and pictures on it but they are removed at present.

4-Kesta Remains

Kesta was an ancient city, its history belonged to the Assyrian periods. Assyrian, Greek and Islamic coins and statues were found in this city. The late Shamdeen had written about Kesta remains in Ikha magazine in May, 1933 and about other archaeological locations. It is far from the governorate center about 58 km. The territory area is about 1378 sq.m. and contains three districts, they are:

1-Rezgari District

The center is Ibraheem Khalil town, it is considered to be the main entrance of the region to the external world in which an international road passes by the town to Turkey.

The district center lies close to the meeting point of Heezal river to Khabur River where the international bridge is passing by Turkey. The name of the town came from the village where the tomb of the father of the prophets Ibraheem Khalil is found. It is considered to be a tourism area. It is and a recreational ground or a general park especially for Zakho people and for the whole governorate.

The people depend on agriculture specially winter crops like wheat, barley, chick- peas, lentils, gram and others even in an insufficient way beside summer crops like tomatoes, rice and all kinds of vegetables and also growing fruits. Lefi area is famous for fruit fields specially in growing fruit trees like Armishte pomegranates, various types of grapes, peaches, apples and olives which are considered to be an ancient crop in the area by getting benefit from the water of Khabur river.

2-Sendi District

It lies to the north eastern part of the territory center and it was formed with the neighbouring district Goli. One district called Goli and the other Sendi district. Its center was Berseve village, was

detached in 1924 and the center remained there, after that changed to Sharanish village to centralize Sendi area, finally changed to Darkar enforced collective town after the displacement and emigration campaigns carried out by Baath regime. The lands in the district can be divided into two areas. They disjoin Zhigera mountain series, since the area which lies to the north of it, distinguished by having many mountains, heights and deep valleys with many springs and small rivers like the following tributaries:

1-Sharanish- Istablan- Bahnona Sendi- Heezal.

2-Garowk- Marsees- Barikh- Bahnona Sendi- Heezal.

The second area is Sendi plain with rich sources. Zakho city situates itself in southern side of this plain. A paved road passes in the middle of the plain which joins the territory center in addition to joining Goli district and Barwari Bala to Zakho city.

The majority of people work in agriculture of winter types such as wheat, barley, chick- peas, lentils and other crops by exploiting Sendi plain beside summer crops like tomatoes, rice, tobacco and others. The district is well- known in making fruit fields like apples, walnuts, pears, pomegranates and peaches. It is also famous in growing populus, gallnuts and oaks.

The district has the fame of breeding the cattle, goats and sheep by getting advantage from fertile pasture lands and fine climate in summer. The northern areas of the district can be made nice and beautiful resorts since the temperature does not exceed more than 32 C. The mountains are covered by dense forests specially in Sharanish, Geli Sepi and Agha Sarket Sendia areas. The most important mountains in the district are Zheegera and Khamatoir.

The district is considered to be a store for archaeological positions which remove the cover of bright pages telling the story of the generations in this area. Duhok Archaeology Office recorded 48 ancient locations and they are:

1-Pera Rabanka (Peshock) 2-Pera Sheik Yousef 3-Sanat castles 4-Geli Barikh castles 5-Sulaman Sendi castle 6-Istablan caves and others.

The district area is about 531 sq.km and contains 69 villages which were destroyed before and during Anfal compaign. Enforced collective towns were built in Sendi plain to inhabit the displaced citizens of the villages such as Darkar, Heezava, Bersive, Telkabar and Darhuzan. Some of Barwari Bala citizens were inhabited in the collective town with the citizens of the district itself.

3-Goli District

The center is Batifa town which lies in the north- east of the territory center. It was forming one district with Sendi district but detached in 1924 A.D. under the name of Goli district. Demka village was made its center, then changed to Bahnona village and after that settled in Batifa. It situates on the main road which joins Barwari Bala area to Zakho city. The meaning of Goli in Kurdish language is the curved plain area in which snow storms are blown in winter.

The lands of the district can be divided into two areas, a plain area forms an extension to Sendi plain to Khabur river, the second area is a rough mountainous area. There are many deep valleys, mountainous heights with difficult paths in this area. Also there are many rivers, brooks and springs which benefit in agriculture. People of the district depend on agriculture in winter season like wheat, barley, chick- peas, lentils, gram and others by extension to Sendi plain in addition to summer crops like rice, tomatoes and all types of vegetables. People shifted in the recent years to grow fruitful trees. They are growing crops like apples, peaches, pears, pomegranates, apricots and others. Its valleys are famous in growing populus trees beside types of grapes, walnuts and nuts by getting benefit from the water of Zeriza and Seerkotik small rivers also the utmost benefit from Khabur river. The people of the district breed the cattle by getting benefit from the existence of fertile pasture lands in the mountains since the climate is nice and water is available.

The most important mountains in the district are: Nizdor, Rawaysi, Kashan, Sarke Showini, Bahnona and Shabani.

The most important rivers in the district are: Zeriza, Seerkotik and Khabur.

There are many historical and ancient places in the district. Duhok Archaeology Office listed 15 locations and they are:

1-Shabani the famous castle 2-Kashan castle 3-Bekwane castle 4-Pera Nizdor on Khabur river, it might be erected in the reign of Badinan Emirate 5-the ruins of Kiret, Begova and others.

The district area is about 208 sq.km. and contains 60 villages were destroyed before and during Anfal campaign except the district center and Begova enforced collective town. But after the formation of Kurdistan Region Government, the hands of erection and reconstruction reached the villages thereby bringing life to most of them.

Amedeye Territory

Amedeye town lies in the north of governorate center.

The town was built on a natural castle, its area is about 17.5 sq.km and it is higher than the neighbouring areas in about one thousand feet. The town has a remote history full of events and accidents. It is elevated to the days of Assyrian empire. The archaeologists say that Amedeye is Amat town mentioned in the tablets of Assyrian empire in the reign of Shamsi Adid the fifth 823- 810 BC and in the writings of king Adid Nirari the third 804- 782 BC and Amat was mentioned in the writings of the modern Babylon period. The circumstances of the town were changed therefore the town joined the rule of Islamic empire, Yaqut Hamawi mentioned the town by saying that Emad Deen Zingi in 537 H constructed Amedeye but Hamid Alah Mistawfi Qaziwini said that the one who renovated the town was Emad Dawla Dilmi died in 338 and named it after his name.

Ebin Atheer had referred to Amedeye name many times and the circumstances of the town were disturbed till the princes of Mir Sevdina Kurd made it the capital for their Emirate in 740 H. The era is led an easy life and flourished under their rule and remained as a capital for Badinan Emirate till the year 1842 A.D. When it was occupied by Muhammed Enge Beerqudar. After Mahmmud the second the Ottoman Sultan decided to apply the direct central system

in the Ottoman States and to destroy the Kurdish Emirates. In the beginning, it was joined to Jewlamerg State and then to Mosul State. In the reign of British occupation in 1918 A.D. a British ruler was appointed in Amedeye. When the Iraqi State was formed, Amedeye became a territory belonging to Mosul Brigade. The first Mayor was appointed to Amedeye in 1924 A.D.

Amedeye is well-known for many beautiful tourist locations such as Sulav and the famous Singe, green areas and falling water which add magic and beauty to the territory. Sulav valley is famous in growing different kinds of fruit trees like figs, walnuts, peaches and apples. The area for agricultural purposes is very little but very fertile. At the same time, it depends on the water of springs for irrigation. The town is famous in public industries like making vessel pottery; Dergani village is famous for this art. The specialists of making pottery refer to it as an independent pottery school established by itself. In addition to agriculture and breeding the cattle, the people practise commercial work, the town being considered to be the trade market in the area.

It is essential that Amedeye becomes a semi- museum full of archaeological places, locations and buildings which and tell the story of descended generations. Duhok Archaeology Office listed ancient locations and they are:

1-The eastern gate is called Zeybar gate demolished during the connection of cars road to the town in 1938 A.D.

2-The western gate is called Mosul gate or Saqefa four. Carved images are seen on it representing people who are smaller than the ordinary size. They might belong to the Farthi 148 BC (226 A.D.). They might represent some of the Parthian kings who fought the Romans. It is a huge gate built by marble stone.

3-Amedeye Mosque Minaret

Its length is about 30M and it consists of 102 stairs leading to inside the minaret. Some have deleted the date of its construction. Possibly it was built in the reign of Hussein Wali who ruled during the years 940- 981 H built by parts of white marble carved in an

excellent way. Each part having three functions and they are stairs for climbing and getting down and a center for the candle of the minaret and the third is an external wall for it. It is elevated by a big dome fixed on a large octagon base from stones with local gypsum.

4-Emirate Governing House

It was in the northern-eastern side of the town. It was in the form of a square and consisted of two floors. Nothing is left from the house except a part from the gate in which there was the motto of the Emirate consisted of a griffon bird under its legs. There were two serpents (snakes) to indicate the sagacity or the intelligence of the government and its continuing looking after the interest of the people.

5-The Prince's Cemetery

It lies in the eastern side of the town where there were the tombs of Amedeye princes. Nothing is left from the cemetery except two domes built by marbles in excellent architect art. One of them contained the coffin box of Sultan Hussein Wali the box was made of wood is grapes wood which remains till nowadays.

6-Qubad School

It is situated in the area of Amedeye river, it is an ancient religious school flourished in the reign of Badinan princes. Books were given to the school freely without charges till it became a famous famous library in the Islamic world besides devoting great inputs for the benefit of teachers and students. The study was available until the twentieths of this century. In addition to many other ancient places and locations in the town such as an underground store. Inge castle and Issa Dala bridge in the area of Amedeye river. The territory area is about 93 sq.km. and contains 47 villages which were destroyed except territory center and Kowane enforced collective town. After the formation of Region Government, the majority of the villages were reconstructed.

1-Sarsang District

It lies on the main road which passes from the center of the governorate to Amedeye territory center. It is far from Duhok city in about 30 KM. It is above the sea level in about 1046 M. The farthest temperature in summer is 24 C. It was considered to be the most famous resort in Kurdistan region. It is distinguished for its calm climate and increased rates of fresh water. In the Royal reign, the royal palace and the stony hotel were built in which meetings for Baghdad treaty and Iraqi ministers were held at that time.

In 1962 when I went to spend a few days in the house of Deacon Gevargheee Binyamin from Ashita I met with Qasha Odisho of Sarsank, a cousin of Shamasha Gewarghese. The priest was in charge of the summer Palace of the King of Iraq in Sarsank. Later in 1984 in Baghdad, his son, Fr. Isho was my interpreter. In 2005 or so I met him in Toronto, Canada Archdeacon Odisho Odisho, grandson of Fr. Odisho.

Deacon Basim Noona whom I had the opportunity to meet in Toronto had come to Kurdistan to witness the visit of the Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV. He had contributed $1000 for training of one person to be a priest. He said he cannot be a full time priest. As a deacon he is serving the church in Toronto and helping our Seminary for four years, $1000 each year so that one priest can be trained in order to serve the Church of the East in India. He has helped for three years. This year he will give his 4th instalment. He will have the satisfaction that even if he did not submit himself for the full time priesthood, he has helped financially in training a priest in a Seminary in India.

Deacon Bassim Noona is from that area. He was happy that he was able to see his relatives in this visit. He is a motor mechanic and works extra hours to make a decent living. When the Holy Qurbana was about to start in the beautifully built Mar Yokhannan Mamdhana Church in Ankawa, the veil curtain of the altar was not properly open. We were helpless, as there was no time to go to the city and get a mechanic to repair the motor for opening the altar veil. Shamasha Bassim Noona, being an expert motor mechanic, could rectify the fault in a few minutes.

There are many fields of apples, peaches, pears and grapes besides trees such as walnuts, nuts, figs, populus, gallnuts, oaks and others. The most important mountains in the district are: Gara which lies in the middle of the district lands and Mateen Mountain which forms the northern border of the district and disjoins the district from Barwari Bala district. The most important rivers in the district are:

1-Western Sipna tributary which flows from Aradena- Barbank- Dawdia- Hamza- Duker- Khabur.

2-Meze river- Kanimazen- Shekafte- Masalaka- Chamritek- Bakurman- Khazir.

There are many ancient locations in the district. Duhok Archaeology Office listed 14 archaeological locations although a complete survey has not been made for the district. The most important ones are in Bamarni and Zewa in which there is the tomb of Sheik Piramos built on the location of a monastery. It was populous in the 9th century AD, Ashawa castle Ashi which was mentioned a lot in Buldaneans books in addition to the ruins of destroyed Amedika and other ancient locations spread in the district. The most important resorts beside the district center are Swaratika, Ashawa, Inisheky, Aradena, Garago, Kanibalav and Bari Gara village which is considered to be the most beautiful place for tourism and skiing on snow.

The Iraqi President had made Ashawa, Inisheky and Gara mountain special areas for tourism and built many palaces and special casinos for himself and his followers. He made the area non- person zone for the citizens of the district.

The district area is about 918 sqkm and contains 101 villages which were destroyed before and during Anfal campaign except the district center and Qedish enforced collective town. After the public uprising and the formation of Region government most of the villages were reconstructed.

2-Barwari Bala District

I used to hear about Berwari Bala since my young days. Mar Yavallaha was the hereditary name of the Bishop of Barwar. The last Bishop of the Berwari tribe Mar Andreos Yavallaha died on 17 June, 1973. He was very young when he died, may be 34 or 35 years of age. When he was sick, there were no good medical facilities in Berwari Bala. Hence he had to die young. We met his brother after Qurbana in that town. The predecessor of Mar Andreos was Mar Yalda Yavallaha who died on 18 November, 1950. Now there is no bishop from the Yavallaha family. Actually at the time of the consecration of Mar Andreos Yavallaha, there was another contestant to the post. When Mar Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan consecrated Mar Andreos as bishop, the other person went to the Syrian Orthodox Jacobite Patriarch Mar Yakob III and consecrated as Mar Timotheos Shallitha. This was in the days of Abdul Karim Kassim. In 1962 when I visited Mosul Shamasha Gevarghese Beny main told me that Mar Timotheus Shallitha was in Mosul. After an unsuccessful stay in America he came back to Damascus.

There is a real question which may be valid even now. When a member of the Assyrian Church is consecrated by a Syrian Orthodox Patriarch, what is the identity of the bishop? Is he an Assyrian bishop or Syrian Orthodox bishop? Anyhow after much difficulty he found a place of his stay in West Germany in Mainz near Frankfurt where he lives now. In 1984 or so I met him in Germany. In April 2009 he was in Baghdad attending the Holy Synod of the Ancient Church of the East headed by H.H. Mar Addai II. Mar Shallitha is the archbishop for Europe for the old calendar Church.

The center is Kani Masi town, it can be reached by a paved road from Zakho city- Sendi plain- Begova- Kanimasi and the second road from Bamarni- Dihe- Kanibalav and joins the road in Chaqala plain. The governorate management started to open a third road from Sulav- Upper part of Amedeye- Kanimasi the words Kani Masi mean fish spring in Kurdish language.

The people of the district depend on agriculture. The place was well-known for growing apples and the product was even better than other international types of apples, but all the farms of apples were burnt and sprayed by chemical materials during Anfal and displacement operations and exposed to drought. After the formation of Region Government, many farms were reformed and thousands of plants delivered. They were plants of apples, apricots, pears and peaches. Summer crops are grown such as tomatoes, rice, onions, peas, beans and other types of vegetables by exploiting and getting benefit from the water of springs and small rivers like the following tributaries:

1-Oura- Bedoh- Maie- Kani Masi- Terwanish- Baluka- Zeymazen.

2-Sararow- Beqolik- Gedidike- Musaka- Nahenk- Khabur.

3-Kabnirk- Shilaza- Assihe- Gerisoor- Musaka- Nahenk- Khabur.

Moreover, they get benefit from Khabur and Zeymazen rivers. The area is famous for fruit trees like walnuts, nuts, gallnuts, oaks, pears and others. The most important mountains in the district are: Mateen mountain which forms the southern border of the district and Sarzer, Sharani, Kabnirk and Hiror mountains. There are many ancient locations in the district lands although the areas have not been surveyed completely but still some ruins are in sight.Books of Buldaneans mentioned some of them like the famous castle of Hiror, Baloka castle, Barokhe, Betnur, Mir Sevdina castle, Sheikho and Belbel bridge, which was constructed during the reign of Badinan Emirate. The bridge joined Barwari Bala district to Nerwa Rekan area beside Mar Gorgees church and Mar Qumia in Dere. The district area is about 608 sq.km and contains 82 villages which were destroyed with the center of the district before and during AL-Anfal campaign and the people went to enforced collective towns Begova- Heezawa- Qedish.

After the public uprising and the formation of Region Government, the hands of erection and reconstruction reached the

villages and the people constructed what the evil had destroyed and changed them into green areas and produced fruit and vegetables. Many houses, schools, health centers, mosques and water projects were built in the district.

3-Nerwa Rekan District

The center was in Bebo village but it was transferred to Deraluke enforced collective town after the displacement and emigration campaigns done by Baath regime, the district lies to the far north eastern from the governorate, it is marked by uneven and rough lands hardly with any transportation roads except Amedeye- Deraluke- Sheladize- Balenda- Chamjew.

The people depend on agriculture to earn their living by growing winter crops like wheat and barley with little quantity and besides they grow yellow corn and palma christi (castor) in addition to summer crops like rice and vegetables for local consuming getting benefit from the water of springs and small rivers. The most important crops of the district are walnuts, gallnuts, nuts, oaks and others transported by animals to Sheladize or Amedeye. Its tributaries are:

1-Marg tributary which forms from two tributaries:

A-Kinyanish- Nerwasito- Gamiska- Mazi- Chamjew- Bibarkha- Geli balenda- Roisheen.

B-Sherk- Arish- Charmanda- Oura- Mazi- Chamjew- Bibarkha- Geli balenda- Roisheen.

2-Bebo tributary which consists of two branches:

A-Bebo- Sepi- Sarni- Pashi- Shive- Zara- Zey.

B-Zeywa sari- Sarni- Pashi- Zara- Zey.

3-Dutaza- Nerwa zheri- Kanisark- Kara- Zey.

In addition to Zey Mazen river which forms the western border of the district and separated from Barwari Bala area and Shamdeen (Roisheen) river which forms the eastern border of the district disjoined from Barzan and Mizouri area.

A complete survey has not been made for the district concerning archaeological locations. Therefore nothing has been recorded. Still there are many ancient locations such as Nerwa castle which was mentioned in the books of Buldaneans, Gelia bridge which lies on Zey Mazen river near Rashava village which joined Amedeye area to Nerwa Rekan district beside Belbel bridge which connected Barwari Bala to the district and they are the remains of Badinan princes.

Also there are the castle and archaeological figures in Zeywa Shekhan, Segere and others.

The district area is about 1007 sqkm and contains 86 villages which were destroyed before and during Anfal campaign. The people displaced to other areas in enforced collective towns like Syrie, Sheladize- Deraluke and Kani and some of them to Qedish and Bagera collective towns.

After the public uprising and the formation of Region Government, the villages were reconstructed but the majority of them remained as they were because of the shortage in transportation roads and the instable situation in the area close to the boundary.

Sheikhan Territory

The center is Ainsifene town and now it is out of the control of Region Government so the center is transferred to Atrosh town. The word Sifen means Wooden in Aramaya and mentioned by this name in kildan sources, in books of Buldaneans like Iben Futi and Shamsadeen Thahabi by this name. But it was named Sheikhan because of the existence of tombs belonged to Sheiks religious men like the tombs of Sheik Addi Bin Musafer Hakari, besides the tombs of sheiks (Hassan, Shams and Fakheradeen).

Sheikhan territory is considered to be a small Emirate appeared on the ruins of lower Dassen Emirate in the sixth Hijra century. The abode of the prince is in Ba'adri village, but the administrative territory is Ainsifene town. The territory border has been shrunk after 14th of July, 1958. Bashik district has been skinned from the territory in 1959 and joined to Mosul territory and then to Hamdanya territory.

AL-Qush district has been skinned from the territory in 1970 and joined to Telkef territory. Two districts remained within Sheikhan and they are Mizouri and Mereba.

Sheikhan is one of the territories which suffered clearly from arabicised policy and by the displacement of the Kurdish citizens from their villages to enforced collective towns specially built to inhabit them. Their agricultural lands have been taken from them and given to Arabic families inhabited in the Kurdish villages. The Kurdish families have been dismissed from the territory center after the relapse of 1975 and sent outside the territory. The Kurdish Azideans have been displaced from their villages and inhabited in near Mahat and Ba'adri collective towns.

The nature of the territory lands are mountaineous with some plain areas beside the plain land of Mereba district which is regarded as an extension to Nafkor plain, Marge plain and Barbin plain. These plains are well-known for fertile lands. Different types of cereal is grown in addition to growing summer crops getting benefit from the water of Gomil and Khabur rivers.

The most important mountains in the territory are Khere, Atrish, Berifka, Sheikh Addi and Chiyapank. In the territory, there are several ancient positions belonging to the Assyrian reign such as:

1- Khenis Remains

They were mentioned in Assyrian writings, in the near by, there are carves and an irrigating organizer belonged to the reign of king Sanhareeb in 691 BC. They brought pure and fresh water from Gomil river to Nineveh the capital by a canal built by stones in some places. The distance was about 80 KM. Sanhareeb put hewns near Khenis village carved in the foot of right bank of the river. These hewns represented him standing in front of the Assyrian gods standing on special animals belonged to them. There are cuneiform writings near the hewns in which Sanhareeb described his project to provide water to Mosul and some other deeds also mentioned the destruction of Babylon city. A visitor may see a statue made of stones in this place falling in the water; the statue contains pictures of winged oxen. Near the statue there is the front of the canal

carved in the foot of the mountain with gates to organize the water. Some of them were seen in the recent years, and some of the remains were used as temples for monks in the late ages.

2- Charwana Viaduct

It is one of the eighteen canals which had been dug for water flow under Sanhareeb project to supply water to Nineveh. Stones were used in building the canal which reached two million stones, the average of each stone was 50 x 50 x 65 cm with five curves. A delegation from Chicago university inspected this viaduct in 1932-1934 and found a chamber that belonged to Sanhareeb. In the chamber he put down information about the building of this viaduct.

3- A number of tombs and sacred places are found in the territory like the tombs of Sheikh Addi in Lalish valley, Takiya a place for worshiping the God belonged to the famous poet Sheikh Nur Deen in Berifka, beside a large number of caves, hills and ancient positions and locations. The territory area is about 1333 sq.km and contains 115 villages with two districts, they are:

1- Mizouri District

The center is Atrosh town and it is the center of Sheikhan territory. It joins Duhok governorate by a paved road which joins Duhok city to Akri territory and Erbil governorate. The villages of the district were destroyed before and during Anfal campaign except the district center and the citizens were displaced and instead of them, some Arabic Families were inhabited in the area.

The district is noted for having dense forests and excellent pasture lands. The people get benefit from them in breeding the cattle. Also the people depend on agriculture to earn their living by growing winter crops like wheat, barley, chick-peas, lentils. Others getting benefit from Shemkan plain. In addition to that plain lands on the sides of Gomil river, they grow fruitful trees like apples, pears, peaches, pomegranates and different kinds of grapes besides summer crops such as rice, tomatoes, vegetables and tobacco which is considered to be a famous crop in the district by

getting benefit from the water of spread springs, rivers and Belkeb, Belan and Azakh small rivers..

2- Mereba District

The center is Chera enforced collective town. The district joins to territory center by a paved road. It contains 72 villages which were destroyed and the Kurdish citizens were displaced before Anfal campaign and inhabited in enforced collective towns like Chera, Kalakchi, Qassrok while the villages in the plain were inhabited by Arabic tribes (Hadideens and Laheebs) and the Kurdish citizens were displaced. Also Azideens were displaced from their villages in Bassik area Mamrasha, Muska, Muqoble, Mahmmuda, Betnar, Baqassri, Kiscastle, Kandala, Chirwana and inhabited in Mahat collective town.

The district lands are replete with fertile plains and with high rates of production since they are extension to Nafkor plain and Murage plain.

The people earn their living by growing winter crops like wheat, barley, chick-peas, lentils and others in addition to summer crops like rice, potatoes, tomatoes, sesame, sun-seed flowers and other types of vegetables.

Cheya pank-Sari Kokhia Mountain forms the northern border for the district. There are many archaeological locations in the knolls and hills of Mila Basseka and they are still in sight.

After the holy uprising and the formation of Region Government, the Arabic tribes left the Kurdish villages and places and the original Kurdish citizens returned to their villages and started to look after their lands. The Region Government with NGOs take part in the erection and reconstruction operations.

Akri Territory

The center is Akri town, it is considered to be one of the large territories in the governorate. Akri was joined to Duhok governorate on 15th of July, 1992. The Region Government has appointed a Mayor for the territory and started functioning on 14th of February, 1993.

The town is built on the extension of the mountain and the houses are graded near by the summit in a beautiful way and forms a unique image which distinguishes the town from the rest of towns. It overlooks on two wide and deep valleys with fruit fields and inside the eastern valley, there is Seepa water fall which is visited by tourists to enjoy its beautiful view and the cool weather in the summer season in addition to the existence of Seedi Majthoub tomb. In the northern-western valley in the territory, there is the place of Sheikh Abdul-Aziz Gaylani which is famous for having plenty of water and dense trees. The narrow passage is named by his name. The place is visited by thousands of Dervishes and religious men paying the visits. The building is extended right now and over the place, there is a mosque with a white dome.

Akri is one of the most ancient towns; its history hails from chalky age which was the age of appearing villages and towns. It is learned that Akri was emerged in about 700 BC as a settling center. In Akri there are locations which affirmed that the town was important both before the birth of the Christ and after it. Some historians considered the town to be a part of Murage country and nearby there are ancient remains indicating a crowded history like Showsh, Sharmin, Gondik.

The town had a crowded history during the reign of the Kurdish prince Issa Hamdi. In 528H Emad Deen Zangi possessed the town and it was ruled by prince Issa Hami and when Badinan Emirate was established, Akri town submitted to the Emirate.

The first one who fortified the town was Sultan Hussein Wali in 956 H.

1- The Carves of Gondik Cave

Three carved scenes are found in the stone, two of them are outside the cave. The first scene or the upper one represents a standing hunter who has stabbed a mountainous goat and carrying a bow in his hands, wearing a short dress reaching his knees and a belt aroung his waist, while the second scene or the lower one represents two people sitting on two chairs, one facing the other

and between them and behind them there are other people. It is thought that it is a scene of a feast or a festival like other familiarized scenes in the year three thousand before the birth of the Christ.

The third scene is inside the cave on the right wall and it portrays a number of animals moving towards the man sitting on the chair.

The period of these caves is unknown but probably they belonged to the end of the third thousand before the birth of the Christ since the people's figures are similar to the images of Luluins in the caves of Naramseen or Anubanini.

2- Akri Castle

It lies on the top of the mountain which overlooks the town. In the castle. There are remains of monasteries and carved caves in the face of the mountain.

3- Showsh Castle

It was mentioned in the dictionary of countries as a very great and high castle. It lies to the north west of Akri town. It is said that Showsh castle is greater and higher than Akri castle, but smaller in area. The Showsh pomegranate seed is famous. Many scientists, religious men and scholars appeared in Showsh castle.

4- The Great Mosque

It is an ancient mosque and it is considered to be the greatest mosque in the town. The mosque lies in Sarai sector. It is said that the one who established the mosque was Sultan Hussein Wali and made a safe for books. Some of them are existing even at the present time.

After the formation of Region Government and the connection of the territory with Duhok governorate, the government offices continued supplying services to the citizens and many schools and health centers are opened. Electricity power and other projects are supplied to some villages.

The territory area is about 1047622 donnums and contains 16 villages besides the following districts. The seven Tribes its center

is Baradarash; Kirdaseen its center is Kirdaseen; Sowrichee its center is Bigeel; Nehele its center is Deenarta.

1- The Seven Tribe's District

Its center is Baradarash town and joins the territory center by a paved road. It lies in the southern side of Nafkor plain which is famous for fertility and in its abundance in production. Baradarsh means the black entrance in Kurdish language.

The people depend on non-irrigated agriculture in their lands. Therefore it is considered to be an important center in producing wheat, barley, chick-peas and lentils besides the summer crops like rice, tomatoes, onions, sun-seed flowers and other types of vegetables. Getting benefit from the water of spread wells for irrigation and they get benefit from the water of Khazir river by flowing brooks spread on the sides in addition to using water pumps.

They also breed the cattle and poultry. The district is regarded to be rich in resources, abundant production and flat plain lands. It was called Murage the famous plain in geography in the books of Buldaneans with the exception of Baradarash heights. The people get benefit from the great Zab river which forms the eastern border for the district.

Duhok Archaeology Office recorded 33 ancient locations since the lands of the district are full of hills. Some of these locations are: Bamrazi hill, Rovia, Zanganan, Hasithia, Gerdapan and others.

The district area is about 896 sq. km and contains 76 villages.

After the formation of Region Government, the district witnessed a quality leap since schools and health centers are spread in the villages and hundreds of tons of seeds, chemical and agricultural medicines are distributed to farmers and the hands of erection and reconstruction reached the villages.

2- Gerdaseen District

The center is Gerdaseen town and joins the territory center by a paved road.

Gerdaseen means the green hill in Kurdish language. The people depend on argriculture to earn their living specially the one depends on the water of rains for irrigation since the district lands fall within the guaranteed rains area and also the lands fall within the famous plains Nafkor- Murage with fertility and abundance in production. The district is considered to be the main source in producing wheat, barley, chick-peas and lentils besides the summer crops like rice which is a famous product in the area, tomatoes, sun-seed flowers and other types of vegetables by getting benefit from the water of spread wells for irrigation in the villages. They also get benefit from the water of surface wells since the area is distinguished by the easiness of water flowing from these wells and in many cases they do not need water pumps to pull out water from the well but flows by itself.

The majority of the district lands are flat and plain with few simple hills and heights which are benefited in grazing the cattle which are regarded to be an important source of income in the life of the people who are famous for breeding the sheep and processing dairy products especially the cheese.

The district contains 88 villages. After the formation of Region Government, the district witnessed a development concerning the spread of schools and health centers. The hands of erection and reconstruction reached the villages in the district.

3- Sowrichee District

The center is Bigeel town. It lies to east of the territory center and joins the territory by a paved road. It lies on the southern foot of Sada mountain in a valley full of farms, fruit trees and a flowing water fall.

The people depend on agriculture to earn their living especially non-irrigated crops because its lands are considered to be an extension to Nafkor- Murage plains with fertility and abundance in production. The lands are characterised by crescent hills and wavy areas. In plain areas, they cultivate winter crops like wheat, barley, chick-peas and lentils beside summer crops like rice with high quality

called Shash Mah. In some villages, fruit trees like figs, peaches, pears, apples, pomegranates and others are grown. The people get benefit from the water of spread springs in the villages for their agriculture in addition to the Brishow tributary which flows from the lands of Nahla district and passes in the middle of the district lands to the great Zab River besides the water of the great Zab River which forms the eastern border of the district. Besides agriculture, the people are interested in breeding cattle which are regarded to be an important source for their living. Duhok Archaeology Office listed 27 archaeological locations like Qalada castle.

The district consists of 44 villages. After the formation of Region Government, the district witnessed an important development; the strategic road from Duhok to Erbil which passes through the middle of the district Qandil bridge was built on the great Zab river. The hands of erection and reconstruction reached the villages and Bekhma, Bey villages were reconstructed once again.

4- Nahle District

In the past, its center was in Pera Kapra village but because of administrative reasons and the shortage of for roads, transportation the center was transferred in 1955 to Dinarta village which joins the territory center by a paved road nowadays. Dinarta village lies in the middle of Nahla valley. To its north, there is Pires mountain and to the south, there is Zanta mountain and Sari Agiri mountain.

The water of springs spreads all over the district and forms some small tributaries especially in Nahle area where Brishow small river flows, consisting of:

(A) Gerbeesh- Seyan- Shazana- Dinarta- Zanta- Zherava- the great Zab.

(B) Naqab- Amada- Zanta.

In addition to the great Zab river which forms the north. eastern border for the district, they also get benefit from the water of the small river Khazer which flows from Kafia village and forms the north western border for the district. The most important mountains

in the district are Sari Agiri and Sada. They form the southern border for the district; the famous mountain (Pires) divides the district lands in the middle, besides Bani, Sari Helowra and Kadana mountains.

Duhok Archaeology Office recorded 31 archaeological locations like Amada, Davari, Gerbeesh, Haran, Helowra, Pira Kapra and others.

There are many tourism places with natural views and fresh water like Geli Zanta, Gerbeesh, Geli Pires, Geli Spindar near Amada village. The district lands are covered with dense forests including natural fruitful trees like oaks, gallnuts, wild pears and others.

The district contains 109 villages. The majority of these villages were destroyed before and during Anfal campaign. After the formation of Kurdistan Region Government, most of these villages were erected and reconstructed once again.

Chapter 7

Erbil, Diana

The Catholicos Patriarch and all the members of the Holy Synod bid farewell to the city of Duhok and returned to Erbil. It was a long ride of 3 hours. The motorcade of 7 or 8 cars in full speed attracted the attention of people along the roads.

We went to the Guest House of the Finance Minister Honourable Sarkis Ahajan. We all had lunch waiting for all the prelates. Some of us were taken to different Guest houses in the vicinity for comfortable stay. The food for all was arranged at the same Guest House where the Catholicos Patriarch was residing. Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis and I were to stay in one Guest House. As soon as we reached there Mar Aprim told me that he would take the bedroom upstairs and leave the bedroom downstairs for me to avoid the trouble of climbing the staircase.

The information about the Erbil international airport which I gathered while in USA from the internet as copied below for those who are interested to know about this international airport on the mountains of Kurdistan which many Travel Agents do not know. A lot of hotel and huge buildings are coming up in Erbil area.

Under Construction facilities

Areas:

Terminal building: 72000 m2
VIP building: 2000 m2
Cargo building: 4500 m2
Central security building: 3872 m2
Operation block: 1300 m2
Fire station Administration: 500 m2
Fire station Garage: 325 m2
Main apron: 166600 m2
Cargo apron: 56000 m2

Capacity:

Terminal capacity: 2.75 Million pass / year
Cargo capacity: 17,000 ton/year
Fuel farm capacity jet fuel: 3,000,000 litters
Avgas fuel: 20,000 litters
Diesel fuel: 50,000 litters
Petrol (Benzin): 50,000 litters

Runway:
Length: Concrete runway 4800 m length
Runway width: 75m concrete with 7.5 m asphalt shoulders in both sides
Taxiway: asphalt surface 4000 m length with width 25m.
Shoulders: asphalt surface 17.5 width in both sides.
Main apron: connects to cargo apron by three taxiways, and connection with Runway by two Rapid Taxiway and three normal taxiway.

Terminal:
Terminal contains: 20 check - desks.
Check passport for departure: there are 14 check points
Check passport for arrival: 18 check points
Gates: There are 11 gates both functions (Arrival and Departure) by bus transportation and one gate for Transit and six bridges both functions (arrival and departure).

Direct connection to Aircraft: there are four escalators and 15 walk laytors with sixteen lifters.

Estimate facilities:

Public phone service
Internet service
Transportation from/to Terminal by airport buses
Duty free shops with different branches in departure and arrival
Coffee shop and Restaurant service
Taxi service
Terminal features:

Baggage handling system
Announcement system
Flight information system
Air-condition and ventilation system
Emergency exit and control access system
Fire alarm system
Docking system

On 2nd November on the festival of Qudash Idtha, Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and all prelates with him dedicated the Mar Yokhannan Mamdhana Church built in Ankawa. Since all prelates, except Mar Narsai Metropolitan who could not attend the Holy Synod owing to his surgery, were present we asked the priests and deacons to wait in the vestry during the altar dedication service. Then we gave room for the local priests and deacons to assist the Catholicos Patriarch for the Holy Qurbana.

After the holy Qurbana we immediately moved to the hall in the same compound for reception. There were some dignitaries present for the breakfast. Along with the residence of the priest and guest house for the Bishop in the same compound it must have cost millions of dollars to construct. The Government of Kurdistan is very generous in providing places of worship for the Assyrians. On Monday we visited some people.

Diana

Many people in the world know of Diana, the beautiful Princess in England who was cruelly killed in an accident in France. At the same time the people in North Iraq know that Diana is an ancient town in the Kurdistan area. I had heard this name when late Yohkhannan Philipose Episcopa was alive. I had met him in Baghdad in 1962. He told me that my Metropolitan Mar Thoma Darmo was a deacon under him when he was a priest.

We started from residence to the church at 7 a.m. and reached Diana at 8 a.m. We started Holy Qurbana at 9 a.m. Muslims and Kurds came to greet the Catholicos Patriarch who was no stranger to them. In the churchyard there was the choir singing *Slothakh Awoon*. Fr. Yathron Younan is the priest of the parish. In the procession

I noticed Fr. Daryawesh Azizian of Urmiah. He was assistant to Archdeacon Aprem of Urumiah. But after the death of Archdeacon Aprem Fr.Daryawesh is the boss in Urumiah. I was happy to meet him more than ten years after my visit to Urmiah in March 1998.

After the Holy Qurbana we moved to the courtyard of the church. Men were slaughtering sheep which is donation to the church for *Dukhrana* (Memorial). They have clean place for slaughtering and the blood to go. Women were sitting there to cut the sheep into slices. I was told that some years there would be 70 or 80 sheep as Dukhrana to Mar Gevarghese. They told me that this meat will be distributed to all people in the area, whether Christian or Muslim.

In Kerala, India in some Catholic and Orthodox churches the devotees bring thousands of chickens to the church to remember St.George (Mar Geevarghese) to protect them from snakes, in the same way as he killed the dragon.

We were escorted to a big Hall in the church compound. Secular leaders came and sat there to greet and pay their respects to the Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV. I think they use it as a community hall for the people to gather and conduct feast. When the Patriarch came out of the Church finishing Holy Qurbana we prelates were escorted to a house of an Assyrian member of the church for breakfast.

On Tuesday 4th November I was to go with the Catholicos Patriarch and prelates to visit Honourable Adnan Mukhti, the Speaker of the Kurdistan Provincial Government. As soon as I got up on that day I decided to pack my luggage. In a hurry I kept my optical in my brief case and started searching the big bag for it. I searched every where in my room and under the bed. Finally I told my dear friend Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis. He also searched my room. Finally when we went for breakfast I reported the matter to the Patriarch. Immediately he asked somebody to take me to the eye doctor and get a prescription for glasses. A policeman with a gun jumped into my car for security as we went to the city. The eye doctor who is a Chaldean Christian said that he saw me in Ishtar TV. I think I was an attraction as one

stranger reading the prayers in their Assyrian language during the church dedication service which was covered alive in Ishtar TV.

The doctor told me that since my glasses are bi focal he will give prescription for two separate glasses, as there was no time to make a bi focal. So I got two glasses instead of my one missing glass. When I got it I knew there was no more time left for my departure to the airport.

By noon I noticed that nobody was taking me to the airport. So I requested the people in the Guest House to enquire about. They telephoned to some and sent two people with me to the airport. We went straight to the VIP section. The flight was delayed by about half an hour.

The people in the airport seemed to recognize me. They began to talk with me and offered tea in the VIP room. It is a welcome change for me, after being X-rayed etc in the American airports to get in or to get out.

That afternoon the Patriarch was to lay the foundation stone for the new Headquarters for our Church, a complex of four buildings. Fr. Dr. Saman is expected to be consecrated a bishop of the Erbil area. I wished to be present for foundation stone laying ceremony. But my flight ticket could not be changed.

Arbil is another name of Erbil. The following information is gathered from Wikipaedia, the free encyclopedia

Arbil's location in the Republic of Iraq.

Coordinates: 36°102 03 N 44°12 03 E / 36.16667°N 44.01667°E / 36.16667; 44.01667Coordinates: 36°102 03 N 44°12 03 E / 36.16667°N 44.01667°E / 36.16667; 44.01667

Country	Iraq
Governorate	Erbil
Settled	23rd century BC
- Governor	Nawzad Hadi
Population (2009 Est.)	

- Total	1,190,251 World Gazetteer
Time zone	GMT +3 (UTC) 2 and a half hour behind India
- Summer (DST)	GMT +4 (UTC) 1 and a half hour behind India

Arbil (also written **Erbil** or **Irbil**; BGN: **Arbīl**; Kurdish: ªÕæáÎÑ, *Hewlêr*, anglicized **Hawler**; Arabic: ÃÑÈíáý, *Arbīl*;; Syriac: *" , *Arbel*) is believed to be one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world and is the third-largest city in Iraq after Baghdad and Mosul.[1] The city lies eighty kilometers (fifty miles) east of Mosul. The city is the capital of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region and the Kurdistan Regional Government.

Arbil's population consists mostly of Kurds and Iraqi Turkmen. There are many Assyrians in recent years.

Urban life at Arbil can be dated back to at least the twenty-third century BC. The city has been under the rule of many regional powers during that time, such as the Assyrians, the Persians, Arabs, and the Ottomans. The city's archaeological museum contains only pre-Islamic objects. The name of Arbil appears to be of non-Semitic origin. The initial *ar* element is a feature of a number of Hurrian place names. The name *Arbil* was mentioned in the Sumerian holy writings (about 2000 B.C.) as *Arbilum*, *Orbelum* or *Urbilum*. Later, Akkadians based on similarity and folk etymology rendered the name to mean *four gods* (arba'ū ilū).[2] The city was a centre for the worship of the Assyrian goddess Ishtar. In classical times, the city was known by its Aramaic name, *Arbela*.

The ancient city wall still dominates the center of Arbil.

Under Median Empire the Median King Cyaxares settled a number of Sagarthian tribes of Zagros in Arbela and Kirkuk, probably as a reward for their help in capture of Nineveh. After revolts of Medes led by Phraortes, king of Media (522-521 BC) were put down by Darius I of Persia, the Sagartians of Arbela rebelled against Darius

continuing the Median revolts. Darius sent an army led by a Median general named Takhmaspâda, and in the summer of 521 BC defeated Sagartians, led by Tritantaechmes, who claimed to be a descendant of the Great Median King Cyaxares. According to Darius, the rebel of Arbela was the last revolt of Media which he put down. These incidents are carved on the Behistun Inscription around Kermanshah.

Battle of Gaugamela, in which Alexander the Great defeated Darius III of Persia in 331 BC, took place about one hundred kilometres (sixty miles) west of Arbil. After the battle, Darius managed to flee to the city, and, somewhat inaccurately, the confrontation is sometimes known as the *Battle of Arbela*.

The name *Hewlêr*, is also used for this historic town of Mesopotamia by Kurdish settlers of the city and derives from *Horlêr*, meaning "Temple of the Sun" in the Kurdish language. This may have originated from the religions of Mithraism, Yazdanism and Zoroastrianism practised by Kurds in which the sun and fire play a significant role.

Erbil became, like Amida (Diyarbekr), part of the region disputed between Rome and Persia under the Sassanians. Under Emperor Trajan it was named the Roman province of Assyria, and after a century of independence was reoccupied by Rome. The Jewish kingdom of Adiabene (Greek form *Hadyab*) had its center at Arbil, and the town and kingdom are known in Jewish Middle Eastern history for the conversion of the royal family to Judaism, although the general population may have remained eclectic but with a strong eastern Christian presence.

Arbela was an early center of Christianity. By AD 100 there was a bishop headquartered in the city. Most of the early bishops had Jewish names, suggesting that most of the early Christians in this city were converts from Judaism.

The queen of the Adiabenians apparently adopted Christianity, and it spread throughout this region, so that the area became a Christian stronghold. It served as the seat of a Metropolitan of the Church of the East. It is known from Butler's *Lives of the Saints* (see Martyrs of Hadiab) as the site of the Sassanian Persian martyrdom of almost 350 Christians in the year 346 A.D.

Until 10th century Arbil was populated by Hadhabani (Adiabeni) Kurds who gradually migrated northward In 1310 A.D. the Assyrian population suffered a massacre by the Arabs; with the help of some Kurds, who were seen as traitors by the Kurdish majority. Its Aramaic speaking Assyrian population remained significant in size until destruction of the city by the forces of Timurlane in 1397A.D. From its Christian period come many church fathers and well-known authors in Syriac, the classical language off-shoot of Aramaic.

The 13th century Syriac writer Gewargis Warda Arbillaya[[from Arbil] identifies the Christian population of Arbil and neighboring areas as Assyrians in a prayer dedicated to the Rogation of the Ninevites. In the wake of Timur's raids, when only one Christian village is alleged to have survived, Arbil increasingly became a Muslim-dominated town. As is attested in the region in general, those who converted to Islam became enfolded into the ethnic Muslim culture of the region, whether Turkish, Arab, Persian or Kurdish. Arbil is also the birth place of the famous Muslim historian and writer of 13th century, Ibn Khallikan. Erbil was ruled successively Umayyads, Abbasids, Buwayhids, Seljuks, Atabegs of Erbil (1131-1232), who was a Turkmen state, Ilkhanids, Jalayirids, Karakoyun and Akkoyun during Middle Age.

The modern town of Arbil stands on a tall topped by an Ottoman fort. During the Middle Ages, Arbil became a major

trading centre on the route between Baghdad and Mosul, a role which it still plays today with important road links to the outside world. A small population of Assyrian Christians (about 15,000) live mostly in suburbs such as Ankawa.

The Kurdish name for the city is *Hawler* meaning *the place where sun is worshipped*. The name is thought to derive from the Greek *helio* (sun)

The parliament of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region was established in Erbil in 1970 after negotiations between the Iraqi government and the Kurdistan Democratic Party led by Mustafa Barzani, but was effectively controlled by Saddam Hussein until the Kurdish uprising at the end of the 1991 Gulf War. The legislature ceased to function effectively in the mid-1990s when fighting broke out between the two main Kurdish factions, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). The city was captured by the KDP in 1996 with the assistance of the Iraqi government of Saddam Hussein. The PUK then established an alternative Kurdish government in Sulaimaniyah. KDP claimed that on March 1996 PUK asked for Iran's help to fight KDP. Considering this as a foreign attack of Iraq's soil, KDP asked the central Iraqi government for help.

While the forces of Saddam Hussein ransacked Arbil, many nongovernmental and International Organizations fled. These same organizations were able, with the assistance of the United States and other countries, to accept many Kurds as refugees. Many bound to the US were first taken to Guam.

The Kurdish Parliament in Arbil reconvened after a peace agreement signed between the Kurdish parties in 1997, but had no real power. The Kurdish government in Arbil had control only in the western and northern parts of the autonomous region.

During the 2003 Invasion of Iraq, a United States special forces task force was headquartered just outside of Arbil. The city

was the scene of rapturous celebrations on April 10, 2003 after the fall of Baghdad.

Since the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, only isolated, sporadic violence has hit Arbil, unlike many other areas of Iraq. Parallel bomb attacks against the Eid celebrations arranged by the PUK and KDP killed 109 people on February 1, 2004. Responsibility was claimed by the Islamist group Ansar al-Sunnah, and stated to be in solidarity with the Kurdish Islamist faction Ansar al-Islam. Another bombing on May 4, 2005 killed 60 civilians. Despite these bombings the population generally feels safe.

The new Iraqi constitution of 2005, explicitly recognizes the Kurdistan Regional Government, and the two parallel administrations, in January 2006, signed an agreement to unify the administration of the entire Kurdish region under a new multi-party government in Arbil. In May 2006 the unitary government of the Kurdistan region was formally presented.

Communications

Erbil has been a center of communications for many centuries. It was a major stop on the Silk Road. Construction of the new EIA terminal is going on. The Kurdistan Regional Government is putting $325 million in the expansion of the Erbil Airport

Travel

Erbil International Airport, a new airport flying the Kurdish flag instead of the Iraqi flag, was opened in the Autumn of 2005, with portraits of Kurdish leaders Jalal Talabani, and Masoud Barzani. It has scheduled flights to a number of airports in the Middle East and to Vienna via Austrian Airlines. 4 flights weekly to more than 130 destinations world wide and a 5th flight will be added as from 2nd of July. Royal Jordanian flies in from Amman and Kurdistan Airlines flies to many locations across the Middle East.

Moreover, the KRG is building a new $325 million airport adjacent to the existing terminal, which will have the capacity to accept the largest aircraft in the world, including the Russian Antonov 225 cargo plane and the American C-5 Galaxy. It is scheduled for completion in 2008.

Visa information

Visas on arrival are available for citizens of the United States and most European countries. Other nationalities must obtain a visa before arrival. As of spring 2007, the enforcement of this policy became stricter.

Historical landmarks

- The Citadel of Arbil
- The Mudhafaria Minaret
- The Mound of Qalich Agha
- The Qayssarria-Bazaars

Villages and towns

- Azadi
- Armota
- Geitl (Sheikhani) in the road of gweir
- Xalan, Haji Omaran, Shaqlawa, Hasnan, Sidakan, Qushtapa

Now Erbil is under the Metropolitan, Mar Gweargis. When the proposed Bishop, Fr. Dr. Saman will be consecrated, then Metropolitan Mar Gewargis Sliewa will get more time to work for his Cathedral in Baghdad and the little village congregations around there. He can pay more attention to the Assyrians in Russia, Armenia etc.

Fr. Saman is from that area in North Iraq. After studying in Babel College in Baghdad he went to do higher studies in Rome. After earning his Licentiate in Theology he took his doctorate in Rome. He was appointed to assist in Chicago.

Chapter 8

The 12th HOLY SYNOD

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East. called his 12th Holy Synod to meet in the diocese of Nuhadra in Duhok, North Iraq from October 27 to 31. Mar Isaac, the bishop of Nuhadra diocese with headquarters in Duhok, did all the arrangements in a grand manner.

Nine of the eleven prelates of the Assyrian Church of the East attended this Holy Synod. Unfortunately Mar Narsai Metropolitan of Lebanon, Syria and Europe had to undergo a surgery a week before. Mar Yosip Sargis, Bishop of Baghdad now living in USA for four years had a heart surgery. Thus both prelates could not travel to Iraq.

The nearest airport to Duhok is Erbil. His Holiness had made a historic Apostolic visit to this diocese of Nuhadra in October 2006. Several Assyrians had doubts about the security and success of a Holy Synod in the country of Iraq. The honourable Finance Minister of the Kurdistan Regional government did all his best for the Holy Synod. The local Bishop namely Mar Isaac Yosip of the diocese of Nuhadra worked hard for the success of the Synod. The Ishtar TV broadcast the programs of the visit of the Catholicos Patriarch with the prominence it deserved. Three bishops of the Chaldean Catholic Church came to the Catholicos Patriarch to pay their respects.

All the three prelates of the old Calendar group of the Church of the East namely H.H. Mar Addai II of Baghdad, Mar Narsai Thoma Metropolitan of Kirkuk and Mar Thoma Gevarghese Metropolitan of Mosul were out of Iraq. But the lay leader Malik Paul, son of Malik Khoshaba came with many leaders of the old calendar to invite H. H. Mar Dinkha IV to his residence in the

village of Babillo which we all knew. Mr. Misha Talia from Chicago came to accompany His Holiness in this trip and took more than 8000 (eight thousand) photos as he did in the previous trip in October 2006.

The Holy Synod decided to promote the Secretary of the Holy Synod Mar Meelis Zaia to the rank of the Metropolitan to the same area that is Australia & New Zealand. This area is upgraded as the archbishopric area, with a bishop to be consecrated for Melbourne and New Zealand. The Metropolitan seat will be Sydney. Fr. Dr. Petros Petros is appointed as the Bishop of Melbourne. The promotion of Mar Meelis as the Metropolitan, and the consecration of Fr. Dr. Petros as Bishop will be held in Sydney on December 7.

The Holy Synod decided to consecrate Cor episcopa Dr. David Royal as the Bishop of California at Mar Zaia Cathedral at Modesto. The other four parishes in this diocese are San Francisco, Turlock, San Jose and Ceres. This new bishop is to fill the vacancy caused by the excommunication of Bawai Soro, former bishop.

Both new bishops, Cor episcopa David Royal and Fr. Petro Petros, will have new names at the time of consecration, as in the case of all bishops in the Eastern Churches.

It also decided to consecrate an Episcopa in Trichur, India when His Holiness makes His apostolic Visit to that archdiocese. It was also noted that the Holy Synod in future has to consecrate bishops for Iran, Erbil, and Chicago.

The Holy Synod expressed sympathy to the relatives of the victims massacred in Mosul recently. It also expressed concern over the Christians persecuted in Orissa, India in ongoing communal violence.

The Synodical decree against Bawai Soro, the former bishop of California was issued.The English translation is given below:-

SYNODICAL DECREE

The 12th Holy Synod of the Assyrian Church of the East, convoked and presided over by His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos-Patriarch of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East, in the city of Dohuk, Province of Nuhadra, Iraq, from the 27th to the 31st of October 2008, decrees that after ample discussion by the Holy Synod concerning the matter of the bishop duly suspended by the Holy Synod on November 11, 2005, who formerly administered the Diocese of Western California and was known as "Ashur Bawai Soro", the Holy Synod unanimously decrees, by the Word of our Lord, that :

The suspended bishop Ashur Andrious Soro is hereby pronounced entirely excommunicated and stripped of the episcopal office and of all priestly dignity which he had received in the Assyrian Church of the East. From henceforth, he is utterly laicized and retains absolutely no canonical or spiritual right or privilege of any other sort in the Assyrian Church of the East.

For the confirmation of this synodical pronouncement, we place our signature upon this decree. May the grace of our Lord be with us all forever.

+Mar Khanania Mardinkha IV
By Grace : Catholicos-Patriarch

.+Mar Aprem, Metropolitan of India
+Mar Gewargis Sliwa, Metropolitan of Iraq & Russia
+Meelis Zaia, Bishop of Australia & New Zealand:
Secretary of Holy Synod
+Mar Aprim Khamis, Bishop of Western U.S.A.
+Mar Emmanul Joseph, Bishop of Canada
+Mar Odisho Orham, Bishop of Europe
+Mar Aprem Athneil, Bishop of Syria
+Mar Iskhaq Yosip Bishop, of dohuk & Russia

When the Holy Synod was over several prelates expressed a desire to visit India. I suggested that a Holy Synod can be held in India so that all prelates could visit the land of the martyrdom of Saint Thomas, the doubting disciple of Jesus Christ. I am glad to record here my gratitude to the Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV for summoning the next Holy Synod to meet in Trichur, Kerala, India from January 13 to 20, 2010, during which I hope that two bishops will be consecrated by the Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in the Indian soil.

About the Author

Most Rev. Dr. Mar Aprem, formerly George Mooken was born in Trichur, Kerala, India in June 1940. Educated in India, England and America, he specialized in Church History. He was the President of the Church History Association of India (1976-82).

After his intermediate course of two years in St. Thomas College, Trichur (Madras University) George Davis Mooken studied for four years in Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur and earned **B.D.** (Bachelor of Divinity) degree of Serampore Senate. He spent a year of Postgraduate studies in St. Boniface College, Warminster in England and visited Switzerland, Rome, Greece, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria etc in 1962. After two years of service in the Church in Trichur he earned two master's degrees in Church History, one from the United Theological College, Bangalore (**M.Th.** of Serampore, 1966) and the other from the Union Theological Seminary, New York (**S.T.M.** degree, 1967).

He was a candidate for Doctor of Theology (**Th.D.**) degree at Princeton Theological Seminary, U.S.A., when he was consecrated bishop in Baghdad, Iraq in 1968. In 1976 he earned his **D.Th.** (Doctor of Theology) degree from Serampore University, near Calcutta. Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam conferred on him **Ph.D**, degree in the Department of Syriac language & Literature in 2002.

Ordained a deacon on June 25, 1961, he became a priest on the day he completed twenty-five years of age on 13 June 1965. He was consecrated bishop on 21st September 1968 and promoted as a Metropolitan eight days later in Baghdad.

His biography appears in the **International Who's who of Intellectuals, Vol. 6**, Cambridge (1985), the **International Directory of Distinguished Leadership**, first Edition, U.S.A. and others. He has 68 books in the field of Church History, biography, Travelogues, humour etc.

He was given 'Men of Achievement' Award of the International Biographical Center, Cambridge, England in 1984, and the 'Medal of Merit' of the Coptic Orthodox Cultural Center, Venice for his Cultural and ecumenical achievements. He was Co-Chairman of the Assyrian – Vatican Dialogue Committee based in Rome. He is also a member of the Pro Oriente foundation in Vienna, Austria. In March 2004 he was given **International Poet of the Year 2004** award in Orlando, Florida. He organized a parish in UAE for the members of the Church living in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, etc.

Over four decades he is the Head of the Church of the East in India with headquarters in Trichur. He is active in several religious and social organizations all over India.

Address.

Metropolitan's Palace,
High Road, Trichur 680 001

Kerala, India.

Phone : 0487 - 2442166

0487 - 2420978

E mail: **aprem.mar@gmail.com.**

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2. Anu, daughter of Fr.Simon Emmatty with her husband Biji and son Aaren in their home in Sharjah in September.

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5. Mar Aprem in the apartment of Paul Chakola, wife Jiji and daughter Diya in Dubai.

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8. Indians after Qurbana in Los Angeles (Tarzana) on 21 September 2008.Franklyn and his wife Anne on the right of Mar Aprem. The family of Varghese Antony Vengassery on the left. On extreme right of the photo is Mr.Thomas Mannuthy from Ernakulam parish doing Master degree in Engineering in Los Angeles.

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14. George Jacob, Mrs Rajamma Jacob, Dr.C.V.Jacob Ph.D., Mrs Maya George, Mrs Mathew Chakola with baby, Mrs.Joe Jo Chakola, Joe Jo Chakola, Mathew Chakola. Seated on either side of Mar Aprem are Jacob and Khristina (Children of Maya). In the left of picture is the son of Mathew Chakola, on the extreme right daughter of Joe Joe Chakola.

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23. President of Iraq Dr. Jelal Talabani and Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in November 2008 in Baghdad.

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The 12th Holy Synod of the Assyrian Church of the East meeting in DUHOK, North Iraq, October 2008. Seated left to Right; Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan of India, H. H. Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch, Mar Gewargis Sliwa, Metropolitan of Iraq. (Mar Narsai Metropolitan & Mar Sargis are absent due to surgery).

Standing: Cor episcopa David Royel (Bishop designate of California), Bishop Mar Isaac of North Iraq, Mar Aprim Nathniel of Syria, Mar Meelis Zaia of Australia and New Zealand, Mar Aprim Khamis of Arizona, Mar Emmanuel Joseph of Canada and Bishop Mar Odisho Oraham of Europe living in Sweden.



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